Shimotsuki Kayoko's Series

C-blossom -case729- (ongoing title)

BF Love Collection

Massugu ni Jun'ai

Cover Design : Yosuke HISAMOCHI (hive)

Kodansha Comics BETSUFURE KCDX2040

C-blossom case729

I

Original Story by Fukui Harutoshi

Manga by Shimotsuki Kayoko

福井晴敏 原作

福月かよ子 漫画

講談社

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KC BETSUFURE

講談社

定価.本体495円

(税別)

Matsumiya Kana's life changed in one instant when she was entangled in a high-profile murder-suicide scandal. As a result, her life changes dramatically. Shunned by her peers and subjected to their cold accusatory stares, she escapes by transferring to a girls only boarding school.

Kana, who has lost her friends, family and meaning to life, thinks she can never trust anyone again until she meets the new student teacher, Kisaragi Kou.

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Boukoku no Aegis (2 volumes total)

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Tankoubon

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The Lorelei, Fujou

MANGA: SHIMOTSUKI KAYOKO
STORY: FUKUI HARUTOSHI

C-blossom -case729-

ACCESSING CHAPTER 1 CREDITS...
...FILE RETRIEVED. DISPLAYING...

THIS CHAPTER HAS BEEN SCANNED BY VANDERGUARD, TRANSLATED BY ^_^TANPOPO AND ELINA, EDITED BY GALIANE (FIRST THREE JOINS BY EMPRESS), AND QUALITY CHECKED BY VANDERGUARD AND SUEY. PAGE 96 COLOR COURTESY OF FURI-SHON. PAGES 24-25 COLOR COURTESY OF BUMPY BEAR.

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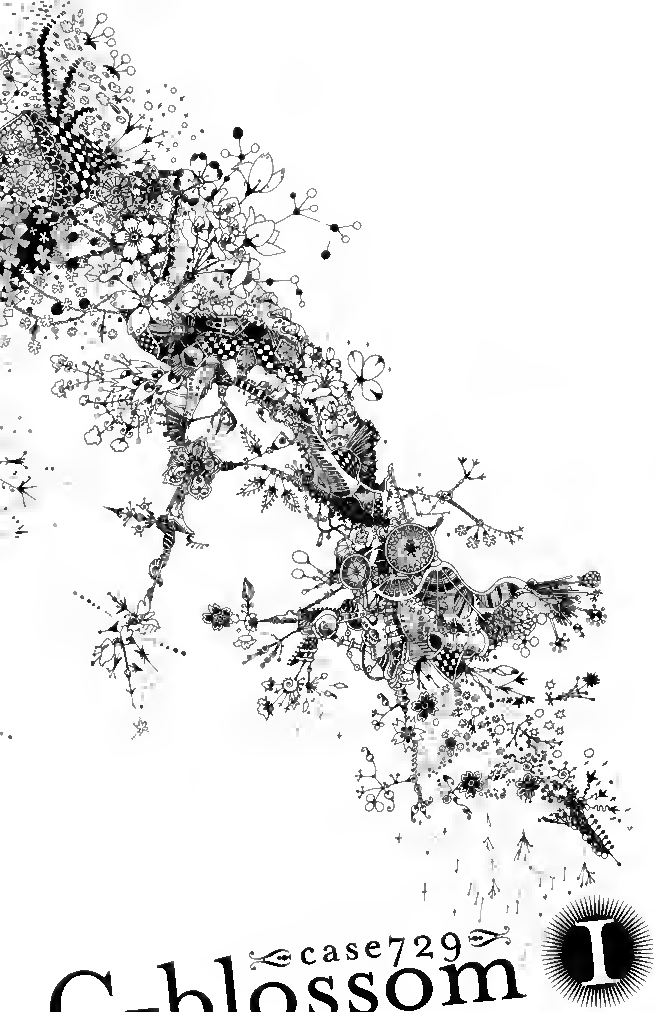

case729

C-blossom

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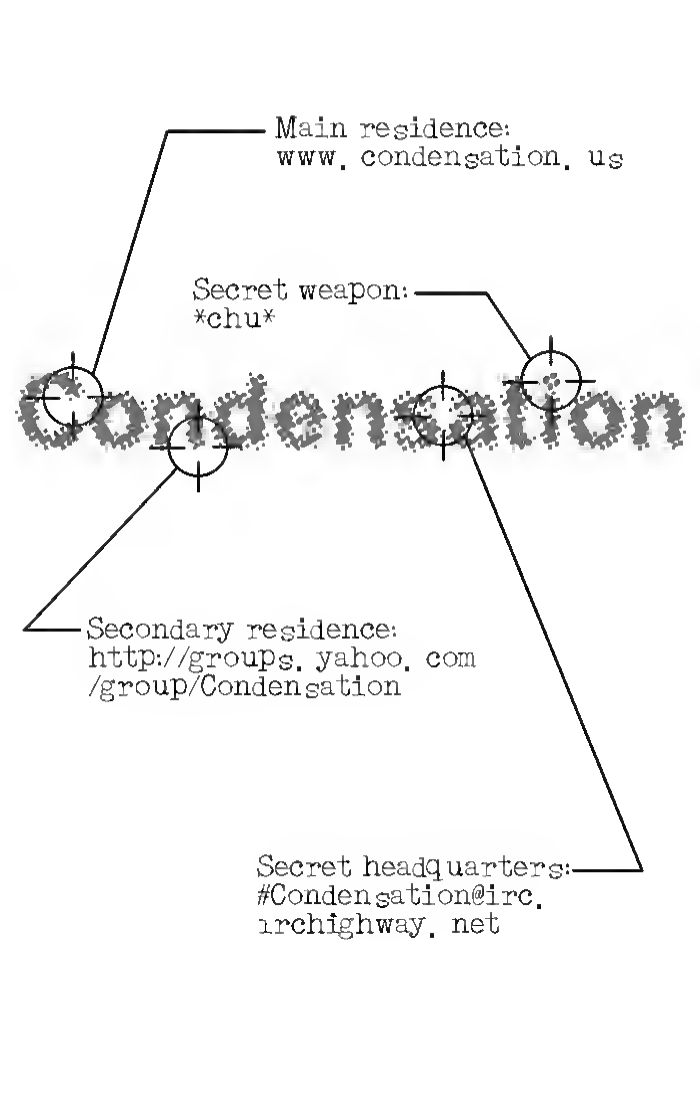
C-blossom <case729>

Story: Fukui Harutoshi
Manga: Shimotsuki Kayoko

#1 3
#2 105

case729
C-blossom #I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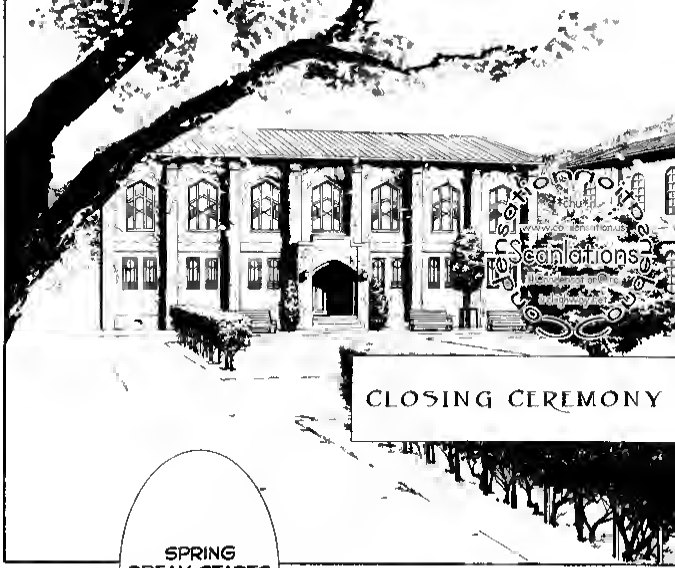
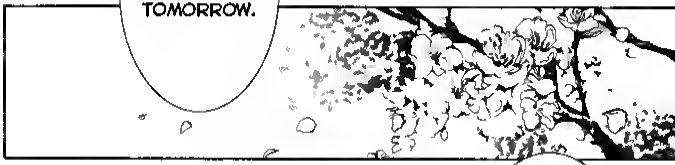
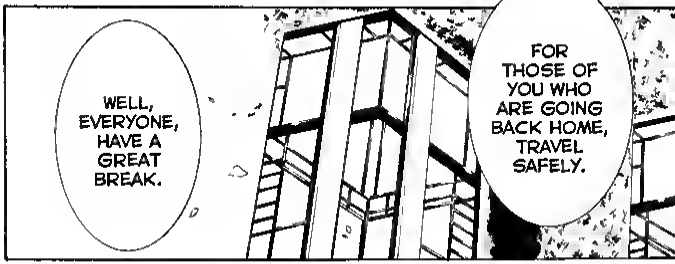
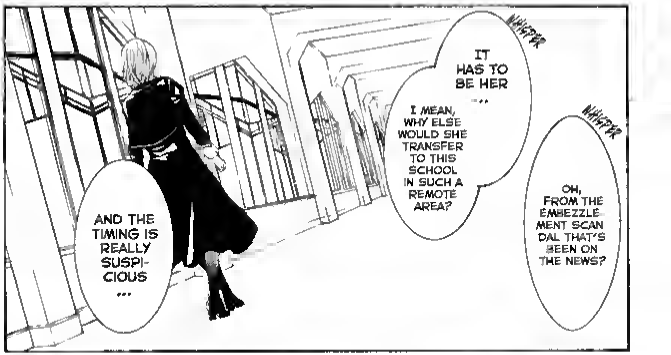
IF YOU WANT TO SLIT YOUR WRISTS,
YOU NEED TO APPLY AS MUCH STRENGTH AS YOU WOULD TO CUT OFF A TREE BRANCH.


CLOSING CEREMONY

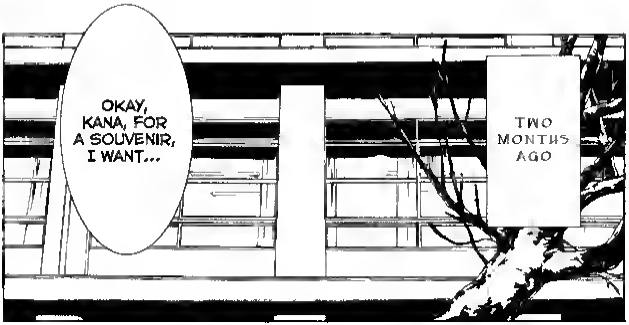

SPRING BREAK STARTS TOMORROW.

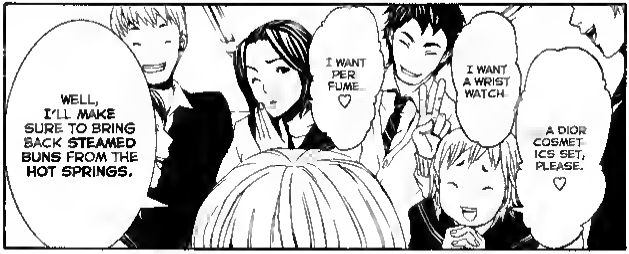

WELL, EVERYONE, HAVE A GREAT BREAK.
FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE GOING BACK HOME, TRAVEL SAFELY.

MATSUMIYA-SAN,
CAN I TALK TO YOU AFTER CLASS?
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO DURING THE BREAK? ARE YOU STAYING IN THE DORM?
OR ARE YOU GOING TO A RELATIVE'S PLACE?
I HAVE NO PLANS. I'LL BE STAYING HERE.

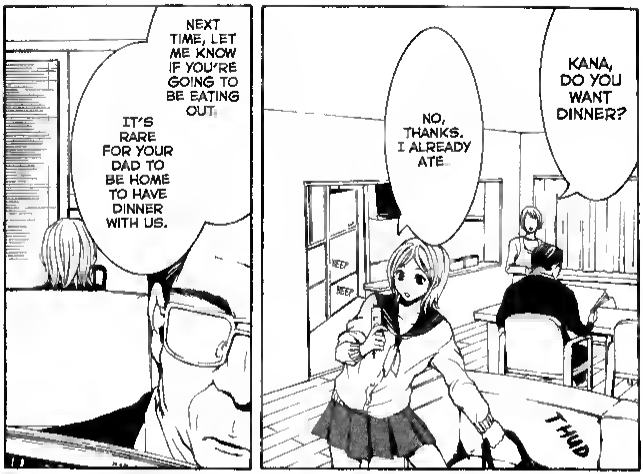

WHISPER
IT HAS TO BE HER ...
I MEAN, WHY ELSE WOULD SHE TRANSFER TO THIS SCHOOL IN SUCH A REMOTE AREA?
WHISPER
OH, FROM THE EMBEZZLE-MENT SCAN-DAL THAT'S BEEN ON THE NEWS?
AND THE TIMING IS REALLY SUSPI-CIOUS ...

IF YOU WANT TO SLIT YOUR WRISTS, YOU NEED TO APPLY AS MUCH STRENGTH AS YOU WOULD TO CUT OFF A TREE BRANCH.

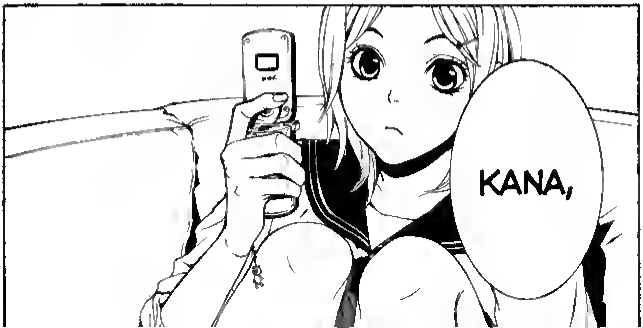

TWO MONTHS AGO
OKAY, KANA, FOR A SOUVENIR, I WANT...


A DIOR COSMETICS SET, PLEASE. ♡
I WANT A WRIST WATCH.
I WANT PERFUME. ♡
WELL, I'LL MAKE SURE TO BRING BACK STEAMED BUNS FROM THE HOT SPRINGS.

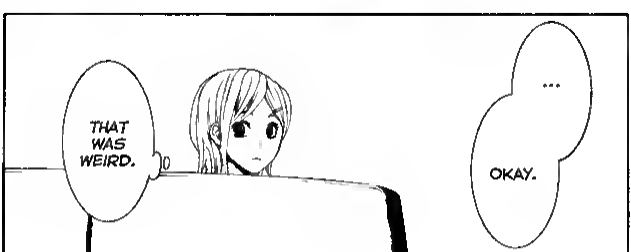
BUT, YOU'RE OUT OF LUCK WITH EVERYTHING ELSE! IT'S NOT LIKE I'M GOING TO A FOREIGN COUNTRY!
Ha ha ha!

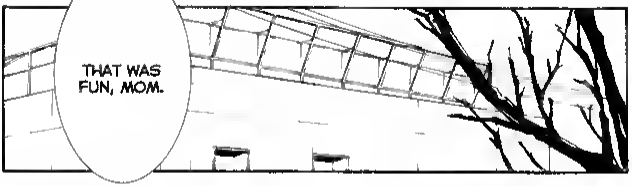

KANA, DO YOU WANT DINNER?
NO, THANKS. I ALREADY ATE.
BEEP
BEEP
THUD
NEXT TIME, LET ME KNOW IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE EATING OUT.
IT'S RARE FOR YOUR DAD TO BE HOME TO HAVE DINNER WITH US.

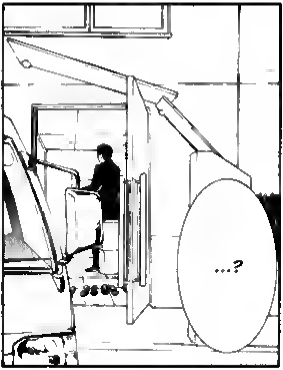
IT'S OKAY.


KANA,

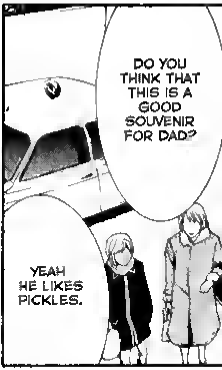
ENJOY YOUR TRIP TOMORROW WITH YOUR MOM.

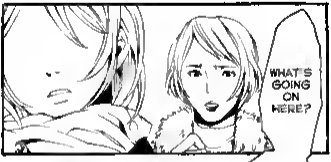

...
OKAY.
THAT WAS WEIRD.


THAT WAS FUN, MOM.


...?

MORE IMPORTANTLY, I HOPE HE WAS ABLE TO COOK FOR HIMSELF.

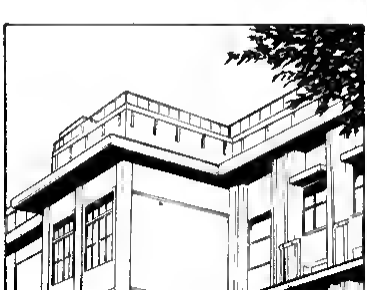

DO YOU THINK THAT THIS IS A GOOD SOUVENIR FOR DAD?
YEAH. HE LIKES PICKLES.

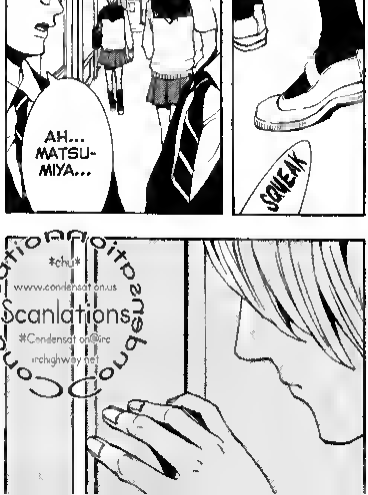

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

WAIT! KANA!
HEY, YOU!

GET THOSE BOXES, TOO.

HEY ...!
ARE YOU THE MISTRESS OF THIS HOUSE?
WHAT IS ALL THIS ABOUT?!
EXCUSE ME, BUT...
I REGRET TO INFORM YOU THAT YOUR HUSBAND WAS ARRESTED THIS MORNING BY THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATION DEPARTMENT OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE.





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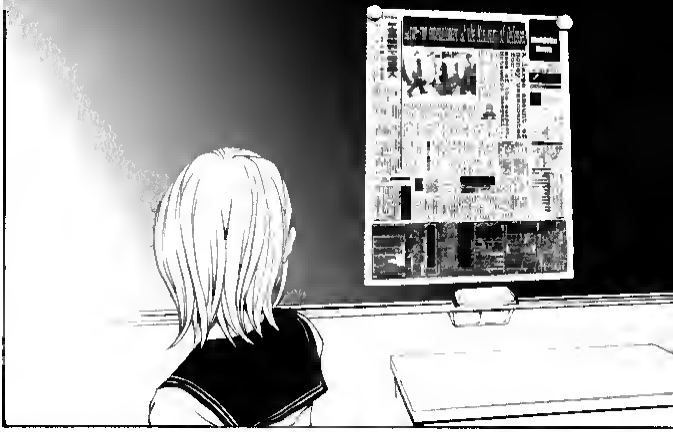
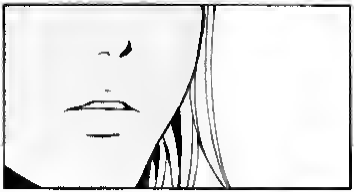
ガラッ!
SLIDE
'MORN-ING!
'MORN-ING!
HERE'S YOUR SOUVENIR!
…
?





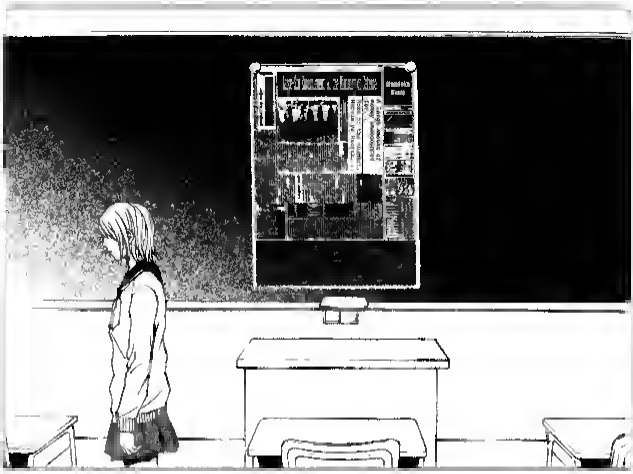
Home of the suspect, Matsumiya Naoyuki.
Matsumiya Naoyuki

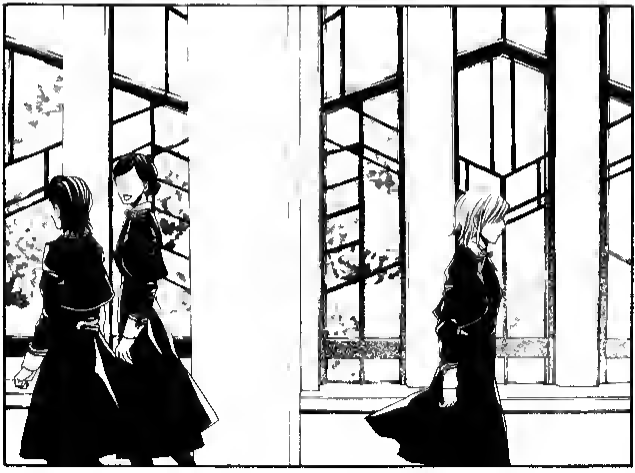
DID YOU GO ON THAT TRIP WITH STOLEN MONEY?!

THERE'S TWO FOR EACH OF YOU.
AND,
HERE ARE THE STEAMED BUNS I PROM-ISED.
RUSTLE

DON'T WORRY!
RUSTLE
KANA...
WHAT HAPPENED WITH YOUR DAD HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU.
YEAH...

OH,
THE WARNING BELL.
BATTLE
DO WE HAVE CHEMISTRY, NEXT?
RIGHT, GUYS?
LET'S GO.
dang
Large-Sum Embezzlement at the Ministry of Defense
Mandoku News

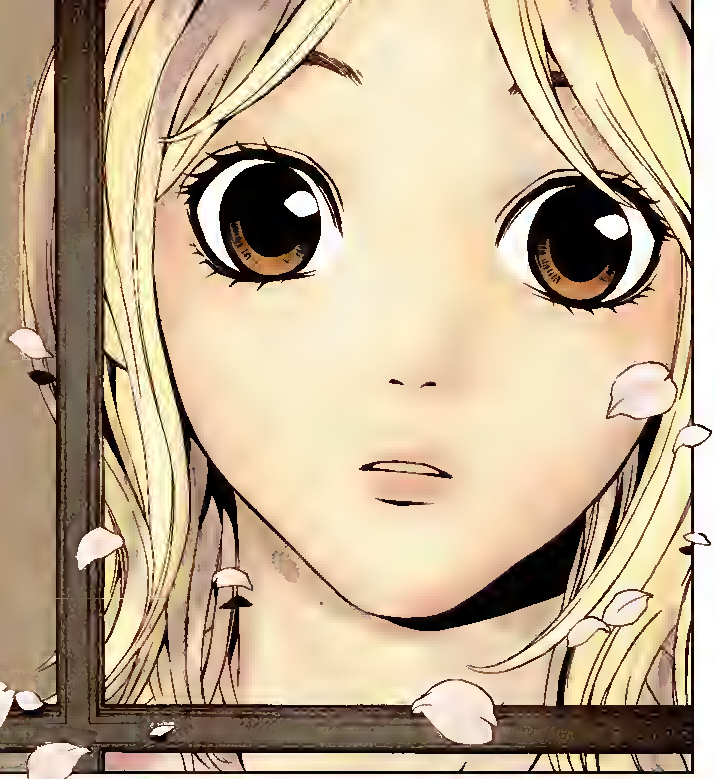


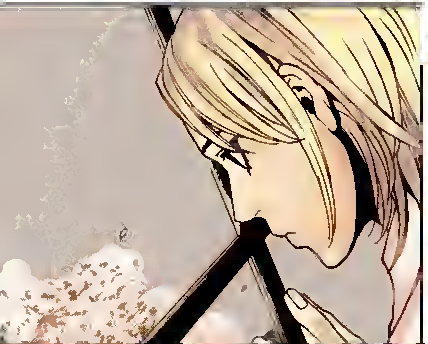


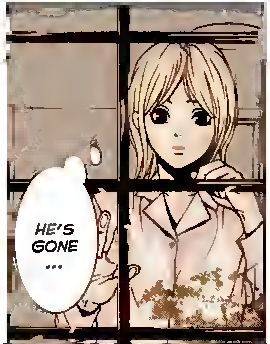
TWO MONTHS HAVE PASSED SINCE I LEFT MY OLD LIFE BEHIND
AND TRANSFERRED TO THIS PRIVATE BOARDING SCHOOL.

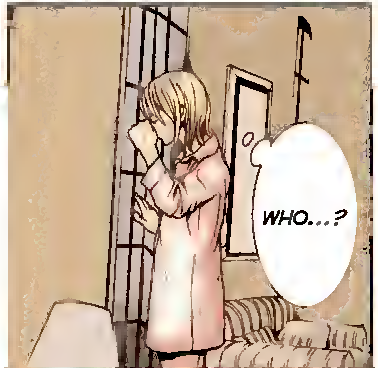
I HATE MY LIFE NOW!
I WISH I COULD JUST DISAPPEAR.

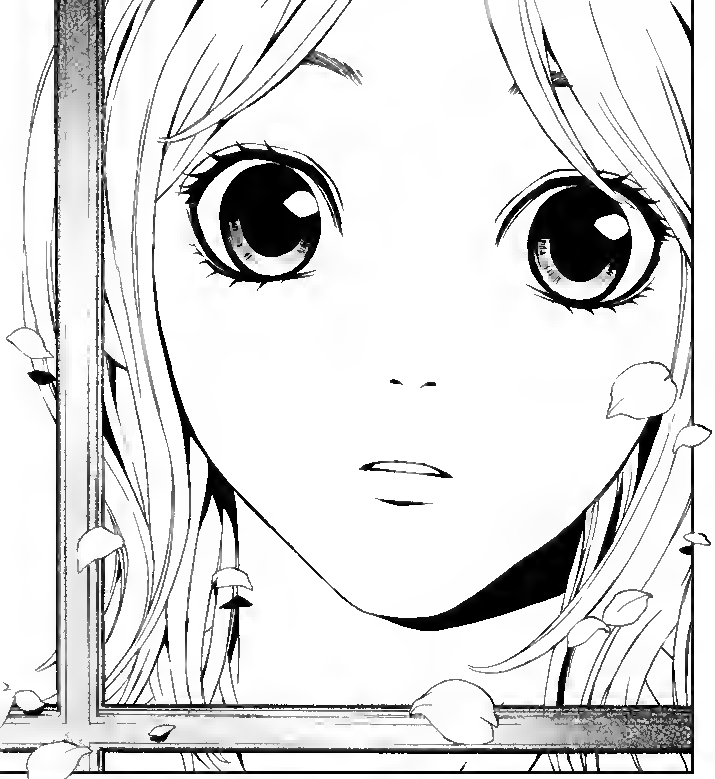
MATSUMIYA-SAN,
SINCE YOU'LL BE STAYING HERE OVER SPRING BREAK, PLEASE WATCH OVER THE ROOM, OKAY?
YEAH, SURE
SO, SHE'S GOING HOME, TOO...
BEING IN A DOUBLE ROOM BY MYSELF...
MAKES IT SEEM LARGER THAN USUAL.

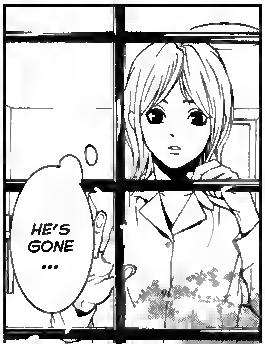


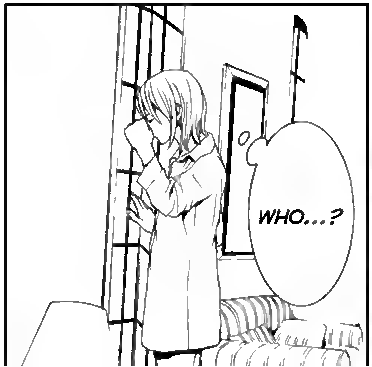



HE'S GONE ...


WHO...?




HE'S GONE ...


WHO...?

Condensation Scanlations

JUST WHO... WAS HE?
WE HAVE A NEW STUDENT TEACHER.

WOW! A MALE TEACHER!
HOW UNUSUAL TO HAVE A STUDENT TEACHER FOR ART CLASS!

HE'S VERY HANDSOME, DON'T YOU THINK?

NICE TO MEET ALL OF YOU.
GRACEFULLY

I'M KISARAGI KOU.

SENSEI,
I'M HAVING TROUBLE SHOWING THE CONTRAST HERE.

SENSEI, I NEED YOUR HELP, TOO.

ALL THE GIRLS WILL BE AFTER HIM! MAYBE I SHOULD ASK HIM FOR HIS NUMBER NOW!
HE'S REALLY GOOD-LOOKING!

HOW STUPID.
THEY'RE JUST LIKE DOGS IN HEAT.

OH, FOR THAT...
I NEED HELP WITH THIS.
HOW RIDICULOUS.
LOOK, LOOK. I GOT HIS PICTURE!! ♡
He's so cute! ♥
HE WAS REALLY EMBARRASSED WHEN I TOLD HIM THAT HE WAS A GOOD PAINTER.
Kisaragi-sensei is so cool! ♡♡

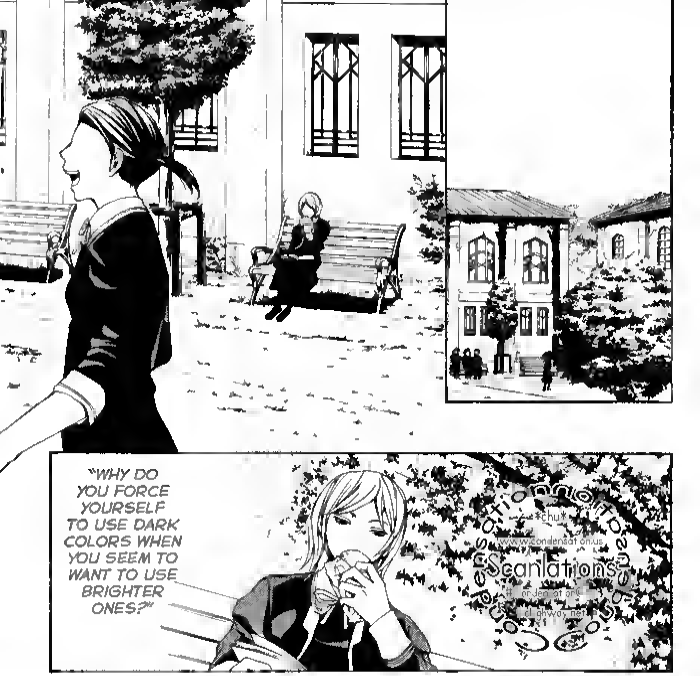
IS THE NEW ART TEACHER THE SAME GUY I SAW THE OTHER DAY...?
NO, THAT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN HIM...!
COLLIDE
!

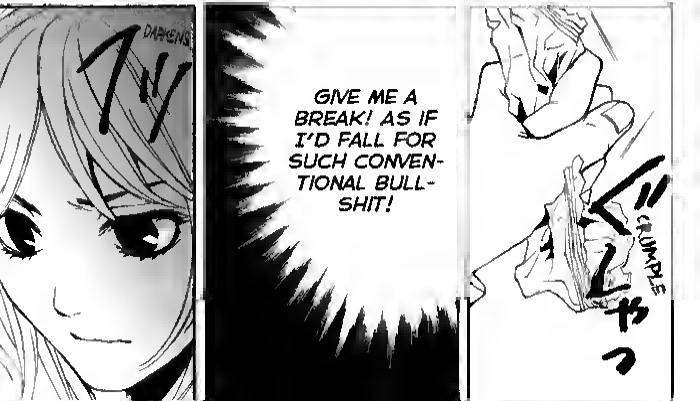
STEP
OUCH!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
SLOWLY

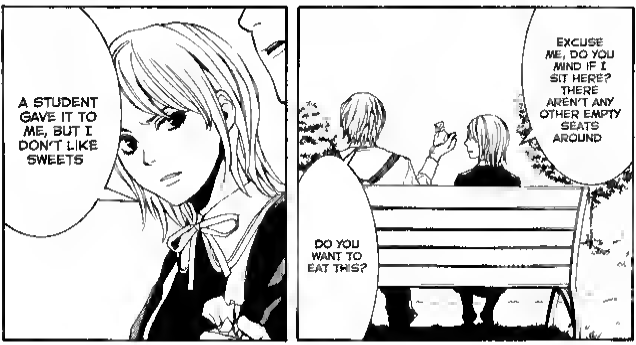
TAP TAP
GETS UP
YOU'RE MATSUMIYA KANA-SAN, RIGHT...?
YES.
AND ...?

THANK YOU.
REACH
I FOUND IT WHERE YOU WERE SITTING IN THE CLASS-ROOM.
WELL, I JUST WANTED TO RE-TURN THIS TO YOU.
BUT...
GRAB
WHY DO YOU FORCE YOURSELF TO USE DARK COLORS...
YOU DRAW BEAUTIFUL PICTURES, MATSU-MIYA-SAN.
...?

...WHEN YOU SEEM TO WANT TO USE BRIGHTER ONES?
I CAN SEE YOUR CONFLICT IN YOUR PAINTING.
TAP
TAP
TAP


"WHY DO YOU FORCE YOURSELF TO USE DARK COLORS WHEN YOU SEEM TO WANT TO USE BRIGHTER ONES?"


DARKENS
GIVE ME A BREAK! AS IF I'D FALL FOR SUCH CONVENTIONAL BULLSHIT!
CRUMPLE


EXCUSE ME, DO YOU MIND IF I SIT HERE? THERE AREN'T ANY OTHER EMPTY SEATS AROUND
DO YOU WANT TO EAT THIS?
A STUDENT GAVE IT TO ME, BUT I DON'T LIKE SWEETS

"DO NOT LEAVE A TROUBLED STUDENT ALONE."
I IMAGINE THAT'S WHAT THEY TELL YOU IN YOUR TEACHER'S MANUAL, RIGHT, KISARAGI-SENSEI?

WELL, THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONCERN!
YOU'RE ...
NOT TALKATIVE LIKE THE OTHER STUDENTS, SO IT'S MORE COMFORTABLE FOR ME...
TO BE WITH YOU.

I USED TO BE ...
...TALKATIVE AND CHEERFUL, TOO.
WHEN... THINGS WERE STILL NORMAL.
THAT WAS WHEN I STILL HAD MY FRIENDS AND MY FAMILY.

BUT...

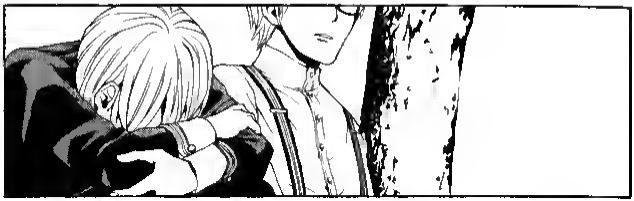
I'M SORRY.
KANA ...
I'M SO SORRY
THAT I MADE YOU SUFFER LIKE THIS...
I'M SORRY.

NO...
YOU KNOW ABOUT MY FATHER, DON'T YOU..?
HE WAS MANAGING MONEY AT THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE.
BUT THE MINISTRY CLAIMED HE EMBEZZLED MONEY FOR PERSONAL USE.
NOW, HE'S IN A DETENTION CENTER IN TOKYO.
MY MOM'S STILL HAVING TROUBLE RECOVERING FROM THE WHOLE ORDEAL...
AFTER THE SCANDAL BROKE, WE WERE HOUNDED BY THE MEDIA AND OUR NEIGHBORS SHUNNED US...

REALLY, MY PARENTS ARE SO WEAK...
SHE'S STAYING WITH MY GRAND-PARENTS RIGHT NOW.
I WONDER, THOUGH... WHAT WAS HE USING THE MONEY FOR?
WE WEREN'T LIVING IN LUXURY,

SO WHAT KIND OF EXPENSIVE ITEMS WAS HE BUYING?
WE HAD BEEN LIVING COMFORTABLY AND NORMALLY,
BUT WAS THAT ONLY POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF STOLEN MONEY?
I COULDN'T TELL THE TRUTH FROM THE LIES ANYMORE.

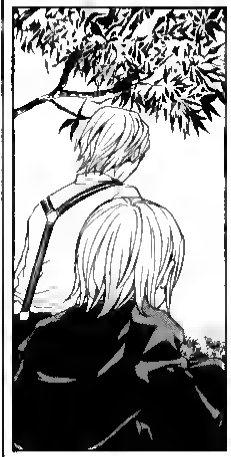
...AND HOW WE'RE HORRIBLE...
...FOR LIVING ON THAT
DIRTY MONEY!
THAT'S WHEN I REALIZED I WAS ALL ALONE!
I KNOW THAT EVERYONE IS PROBABLY THINKING ABOUT MY FATHER'S SCANDAL...
EVEN THOUGH I TRANSFERRED HERE FOR A FRESH START,
I STILL CAN'T TRUST ANYONE.



IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT.

YOU SHOULDN'T BLAME YOURSELF.
I WISH...
I COULD JUST DIS-APPEAR.

Sensational Scanlations
www.sensationalscans.com
chu



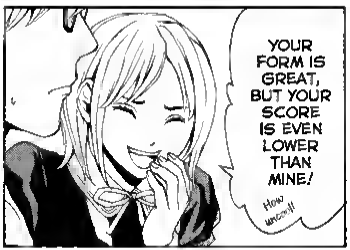
IF THAT'S HOW YOU FEEL, THEN LET'S DIS-APPEAR.

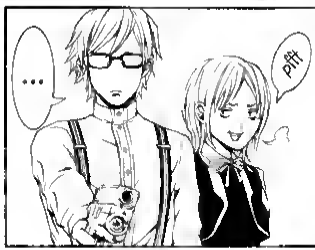
Vroo...
BRRRRM
BUT THEY WERE JUST THE WORDS I NEEDED TO HEAR.
FIRST, WE'LL DISAPPEAR FROM THIS SCHOOL.
YEAH!
TAKE THAT!
AND THAT!
ARGH!!
GAME OVE
SCORE 100890
WHAT?!
EVERYTHING HE SAID WAS SO FORMULAIC...

THIS GAME MUST BE BROKEN!
HAHAHA
NO, YOU'RE JUST AWFUL
THEN, YOU DO IT, KISARAGI-SENSEI!!
TURN
LIFT

SURPRISED

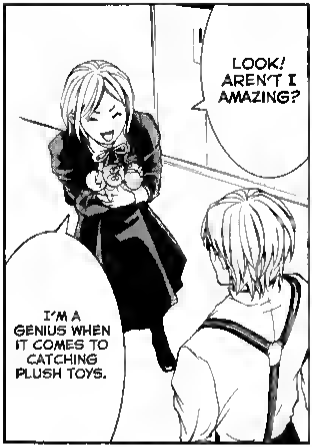
RANKINGS
(RANK) (NAME) (SCORE) (TIME)
1st A YSK 235590 25'11"83
2nd A FRO 211050 32'58"10
3rd D SUM 105850 22'51"70
4th D KWA 100890 21'17"65
5th E ??? 009080 10'59"09


YOUR FORM IS GREAT, BUT YOUR SCORE IS EVEN LOWER THAN MINE!
How unfair!!


...
Pfft

I'M JUST HAVING AN OFF-DAY.

OH!
THESE ARE SO CUTE!
DASH
Mission start!
KISARAGI-SENSE!/
Photo Booth
HEY...
HUH?
WHAT?
HERE, I'M DONE NOW
Pass


LOOK! AREN'T I AMAZING?
I'M A GENIUS WHEN IT COMES TO CATCHING PLUSH TOYS.

1st
2nd
JUST WHO IS HE?
This score's impossible!!

BUT I DON'T WANT TO GO BACK YET...

YEAH... YOU'RE RIGHT.

MATSU-MIYA,
LET'S GO BACK.
We can't stay out too late

I WANT TO STAY OUT, EVEN IF IT'S JUST FOR A LITTLE WHILE LONGER BECAUSE...
SCHOOL STARTS AGAIN TOMOR-ROW...
I REALLY DON'T WANT TO GO BACK ...
screech

IF YOU REALLY WANT TO DISAPPEAR, I CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN.

IF YOU'RE WILLING TO COOPERATE,
I WANT YOU TO COME WITH US.
...?
I DON'T WANT YOUR FATHER TO TESTIFY ANY FURTHER.
TESTIFY...?
IF HE CONTINUES TO TALK, MANY PEOPLE WILL SUFFER.
WHAT ARE YOU ...?
BUMP

IF YOU ASK YOUR FATHER TO REMAIN QUIET, HE WILL.
KISARAGI-SEN... SEI...?
IN OTHER WORDS ...
THE ONLY WAY TO SECURE YOUR FATHER'S SILENCE IS TO TAKE YOU HOSTAGE.
HOSTAGE...?

IT WON'T OPEN!!
GRAB
THE DOOR—
SHUT
THUD
SORRY FOR TRICKING YOU,

RUSTLE
BODY-GUARDS?
BUT THIS WAS THE ONLY WAY TO GET RID OF YOUR BODY-GUARDS.

THEY'RE POSITIONED THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL.

THEY MUST BE FREAKING OUT BY NOW...
DASH

RUSTLE
WAVE

...BECAUSE THEY LOST THEIR CHARGE.

I CAN'T ALLOW...
...SOMETHING LIKE THIS TO HAPPEN!
YOU'RE A GOOD, OBEDIENT STUDENT ...
I HOPE YOU TAKE AFTER YOUR FATHER
PULL
attack
TWIST

FLASH
WHA—
I CAN'T SEE!!
THUD
THUD

STEP

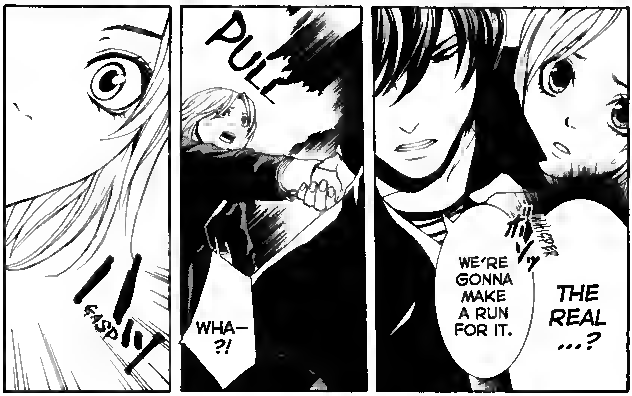
Scanlations

LIFT

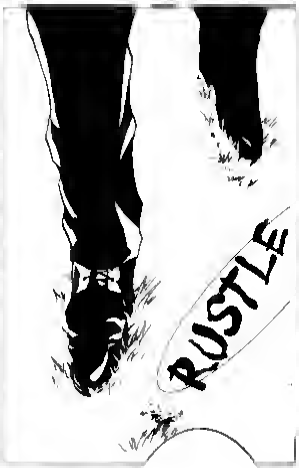
HEY!
YOU'RE THE GUY FROM THAT TIME—
land

BAM
BAM
BAM
SHIT! THEY GOT AWAY.
REACH
!!
BAM
SLIDE
SO...

...THE REAL KISARAGI KOU FINALLY DECIDED TO SHOW UP.


gasp
PULL
WHA—?!
THE REAL ...?
WE'RE GONNA MAKE A RUN FOR IT.

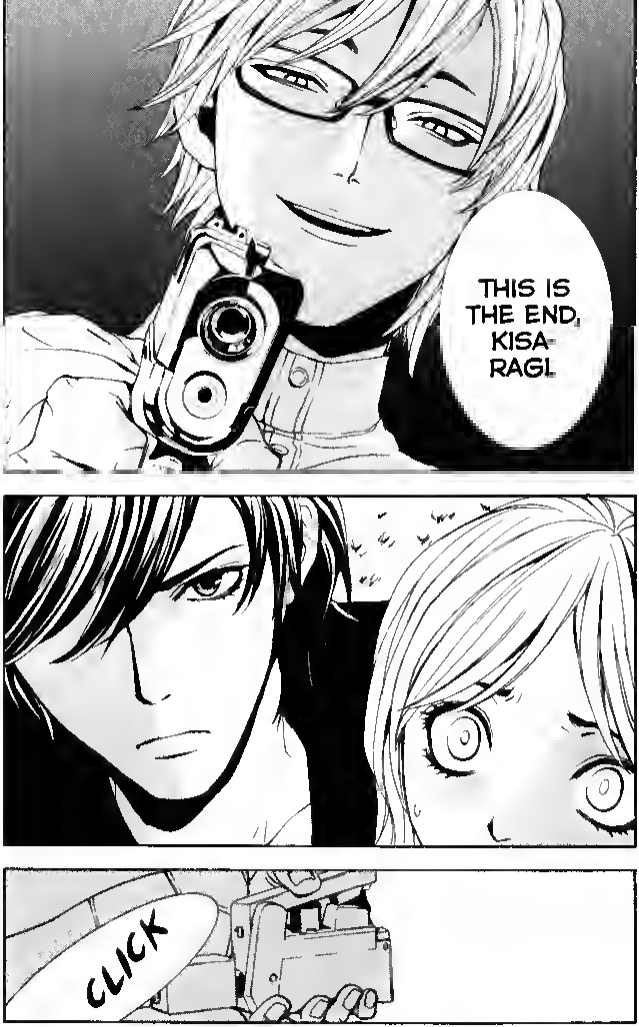
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN HIDING?
IF I HAD KNOWN THAT YOU WERE GONNA BE HERE, I WOULDN'T HAVE USED YOUR NAME ...
HE HAS A GUN?!
WHAT IS HE DOING ...?
SO WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?


RUSTLE

YOU KNOW, YOU REALLY HAVEN'T CHANGED A BIT SINCE OUR TRAINING DAYS.
CLICK

YOU'RE ALWAYS...
...GETTING IN MY WAY!!

WHO ORDERED THIS MISSION?
ANSWER ME!
TOUYA!
OFFICIAL?
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN TO US--
TO YOU AND I, WHO ARE NOT SUPPOSED TO EXIST?
I DON'T CARE WHO ORDERED IT.
I ONLY CARE THAT I COMPLETE MY MISSION SUCCESSFULLY.
YOU KNOW THAT WHAT YOU'RE DOING ISN'T PART OF THE OFFICIAL MISSION!

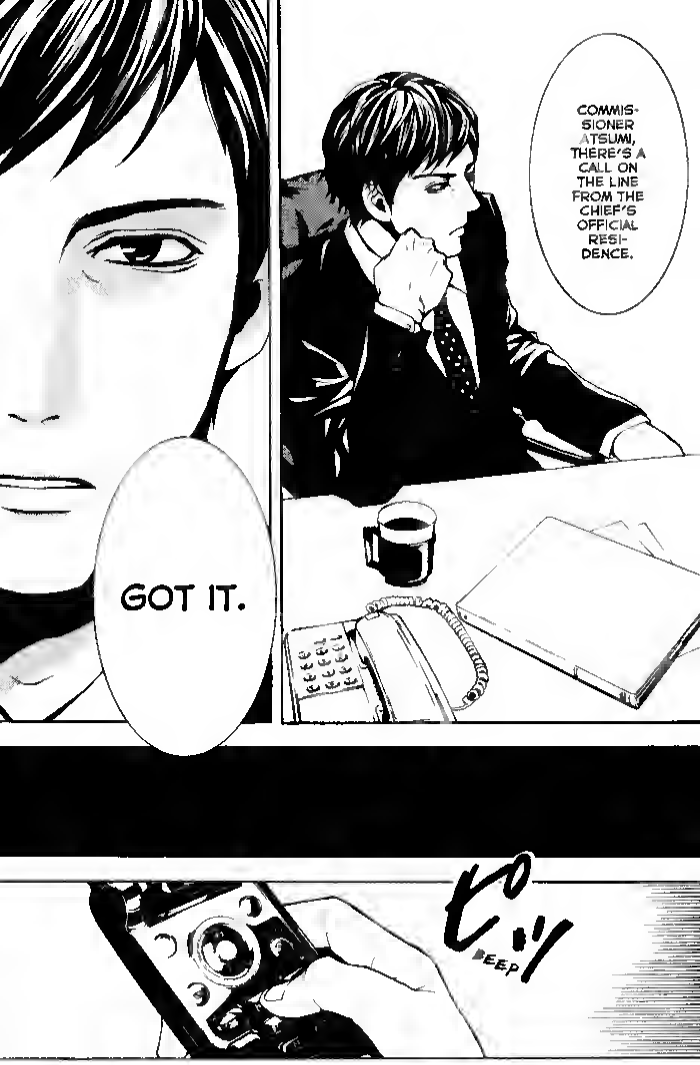

THIS IS THE END, KISARAGI.
CLICK

BOOM
Condensation Scanlations
#chu
www.condensation.us
#Condensation@irc
irchighway.net
CRUMBLE
CRUMBLE

PULL
!
COUGH
COUGH
COME WITH ME IF YOU WANT TO LIVE.
GRASP

THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE IN ICHIGAYA, TOKYO
SO HE FINALLY SHOWED HIMSELF ...
AND? THE CHARGE IS SAFE, ISN'T SHE?
TAKAGI-SAN!
DAMN!
I WILL ARRANGE FOR YOUR RESCUE.
YOU WILL STAY WITH MATSUMIYA-KANA AND PROTECT HER.
DON'T WORRY, WE'LL INVESTIGATE TODAY.
HE'S GOOD, BUT HE DOESN'T HAVE YOUR SKILLS. TRUST ME, I WAS YOUR INSTRUCTOR.

WHO IS IT?!
WHO IS BEHIND ALL THIS?
NOT ONLY DOES TAKAGI-SAN HAVE TO DEAL WITH THE CHAOS IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS CAUSED BY HAVING A NEW COMMISSIONER,
COMMISSIONER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS
BUT NOW HE HAS TO DEAL WITH THIS EMBEZZLEMENT GROUP, TOO.


COMMIS-
SIONER
ATSUMI,
THERE'S A
CALL ON
THE LINE
FROM THE
CHIEF'S
OFFICIAL
RESI-
DENCE.
GOT IT.
BEEP

CLACK
PANT
GET IN—
PANT
SHUT
FASTEN YOUR SEAT-BELT
HURRY!
PANT

HOW RUDE AND DEMANDING...
JUST WHO ARE YOU?
CLICK
...
WELL, YOU MUST BE FROM THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE LIKE MY DAD, RIGHT?
VROOM
...
CLACK

I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE UNTIL YOU TELL ME WHAT'S GOING ON!

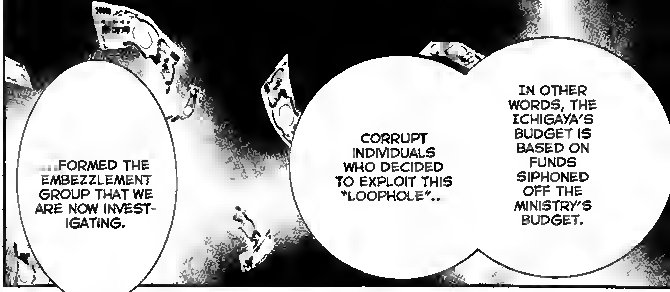
C'MON! I CAN'T GUARANTEE YOUR SAFETY IF WE STAY HERE!
TOUYA WILL FIND US SOON!
SEE YA!

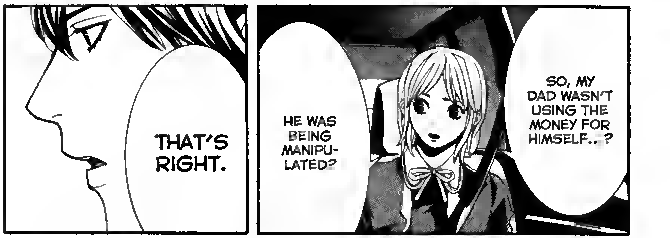
TOUYA AND I ARE AGENTS OF THE ICHI-GAYA.

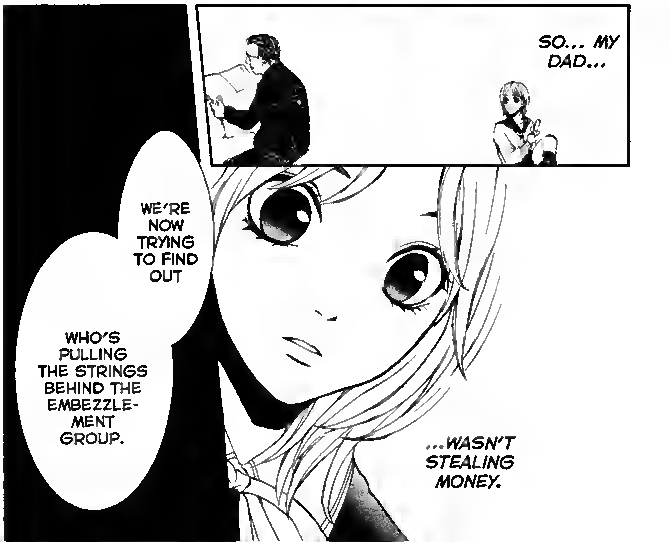
ICHI-GAYA ...?
THE ICHI-GAYA ...
...IS A SECRET ORGANIZATION IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE
THAT DEALS WITH CONFI-DENTIAL CASES RELATED TO NA-TIONAL DEFENSE THAT THE POLICE CAN'T HANDLE.
YOUR DAD,
MATSU-MIYA-SAN, WAS DOING ADMINI-STRATIVE WORK FOR THE ICHI-GAYA.
WHAT?!

NO.
HE WAS WORKING IN THE AC-COUNTING DEPART-MENT.
MY DAD WAS A SPY?
THE EMBEZ-ZLEMENT SCANDAL THAT APPEARED IN THE MEDIA TWO MONTHS AGO...
防衛庁で巨額の横領
...WAS A LEGAL COVER-UP.

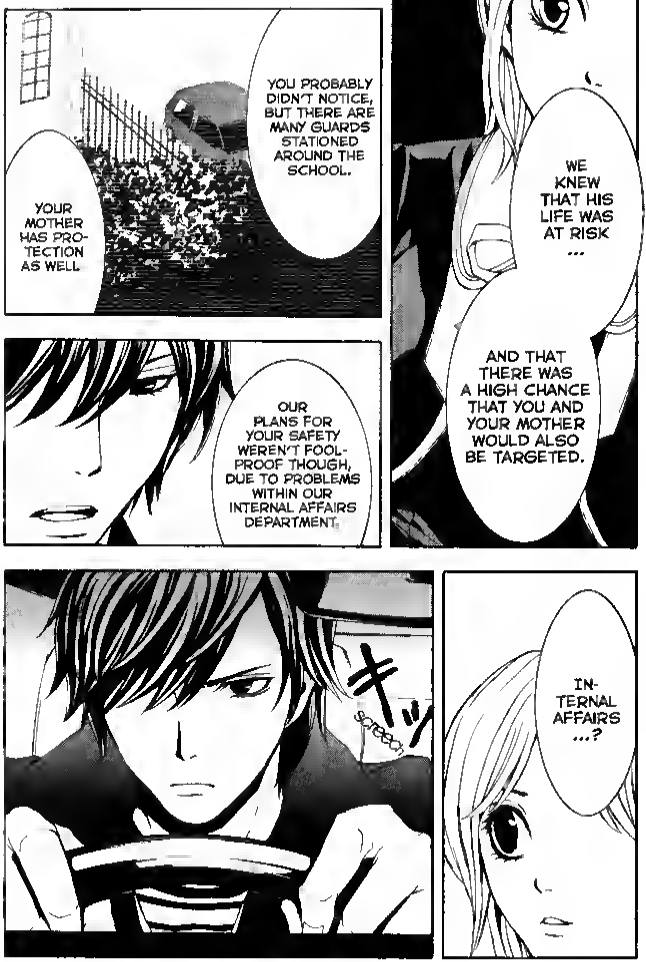
YOUR FATHER, AS A CONTROLLER IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE, HAD THE TASK OF APPROPRIATING FUNDS TO DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS WITHIN THE MINISTRY
EVEN THOUGH THE ICHIGAYA IS A SECRET ORGANIZATION IN THE MINISTRY, IT STILL NEEDS MONEY TO OPERATE.
THAT'S WHY ITS FUNDING WAS TAKEN FROM THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE'S BUDGET WITHOUT GOING THROUGH THE PROPER CHANNELS
NIPPON
GINKO
10000

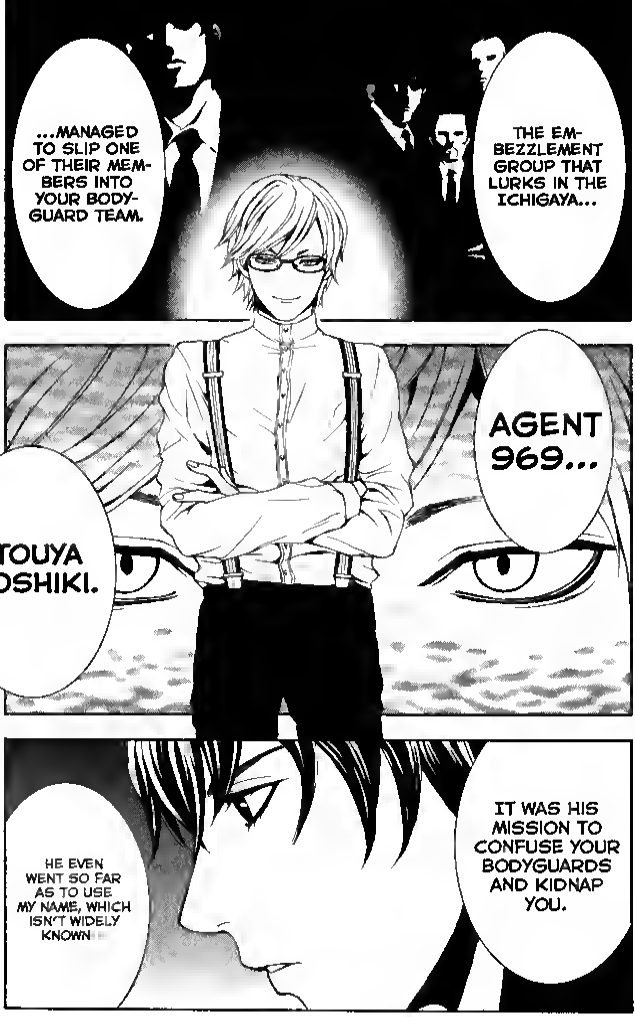

IN OTHER WORDS, THE ICHIGAYA'S BUDGET IS BASED ON FUNDS SIPHONED OFF THE MINISTRY'S BUDGET.
CORRUPT INDIVIDUALS WHO DECIDED TO EXPLOIT THIS "LOOPHOLE"..
...FORMED THE EMBEZZLEMENT GROUP THAT WE ARE NOW INVESTIGATING.


SO, MY DAD WASN'T USING THE MONEY FOR HIMSELF...?
HE WAS BEING MANIPULATED?
THAT'S RIGHT.

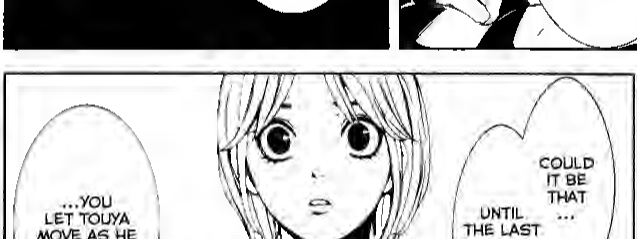

SO... MY DAD...
...WASN'T STEALING MONEY.
WE'RE NOW TRYING TO FIND OUT
WHO'S PULLING THE STRINGS BEHIND THE EMBEZZLEMENT GROUP.

WE NEED TO KILL HIM TO SHUT HIM UP. THAT'S WHAT THEY'RE THINKING.
WE CAN'T HAVE MATSUMIYA TALK NOW.
WOULDN'T MY DAD KNOW WHO THE MASTER-MIND IS?
YES, THAT'S WHY HE'S IN DAN-GER.
K-
KILL HIM ...?!
IT'S NOT UNCOMMON FOR A PRISONER TO COMMIT SUICIDE.
THE EM-BEZZLEMENT GROUP IS PLANNING TO KIDNAP YOU AND YOUR MOTHER...
...TO FORCE MATSUMIYA-SAN TO KILL HIMSELF.


WE KNEW THAT HIS LIFE WAS AT RISK ...
AND THAT THERE WAS A HIGH CHANCE THAT YOU AND YOUR MOTHER WOULD ALSO BE TARGETED.
OUR PLANS FOR YOUR SAFETY WEREN'T FOOL-PROOF THOUGH, DUE TO PROBLEMS WITHIN OUR INTERNAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT.
YOU PROBABLY DIDN'T NOTICE, BUT THERE ARE MANY GUARDS STATIONED AROUND THE SCHOOL.
YOUR MOTHER HAS PRO-TECTION AS WELL.
キッ
Screech
IN-TERNAL AFFAIRS ...?


THE EMBEZZLEMENT GROUP THAT LURKS IN THE ICHIGAYA...
...MANAGED TO SLIP ONE OF THEIR MEMBERS INTO YOUR BODYGUARD TEAM.
AGENT 969...
TOUYA YOSHIKI.
IT WAS HIS MISSION TO CONFUSE YOUR BODYGUARDS AND KIDNAP YOU.
HE EVEN WENT SO FAR AS TO USE MY NAME, WHICH ISN'T WIDELY KNOWN.

WE WANTED TO SECURE YOU EARLIER, BUT...
YOUR DAD ISN'T TALKING, BECAUSE HE KNOWS THAT IT WILL PUT YOU AND YOUR MOTHER IN DANGER.

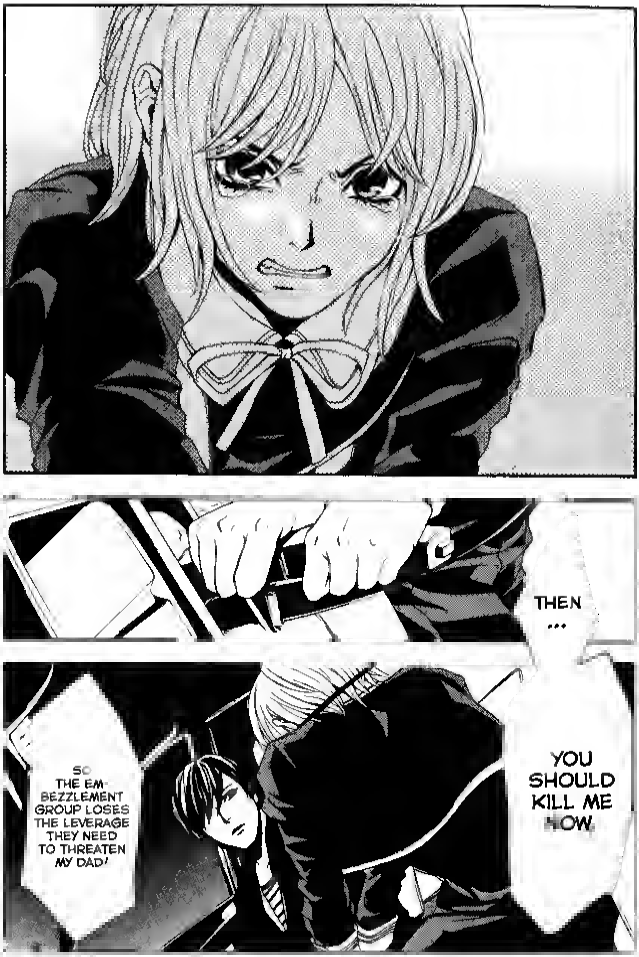

...YOU LET TOUYA MOVE AS HE PLANNED?
UNTIL THE LAST POSSIBLE MOMENT ...
COULD IT BE THAT ...

IF I HAD MADE A MOVE THEN, IT WOULD HAVE TIPPED OFF WHOEVER IT WAS THAT SENT TOUYA TO COME AFTER YOU.
WERE YOU WATCHING WHEN I WAS AB-DUCTED?
IF THIS WAS A SECRET FROM OTHERS
AND YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE ASSIGNED TO PROTECT ME,

THERE ARE PEOPLE BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE ICHIGAYA WHO ARE PART OF THE EMBEZZLEMENT GROUP.
WE NEED TO CRUSH BOTH FACTIONS— GETTING RID OF JUST ONE IS MEANINGLESS.
SO, THEY'RE ONLY HELPING ME AND MY DAD RIGHT NOW...
BECAUSE THEY NEED TO USE US AGAINST THE EMBEZZLEMENT GROUP?
ONLY I AND THE CASE OFFICER KNOW THIS.
WE WERE...
GRASP

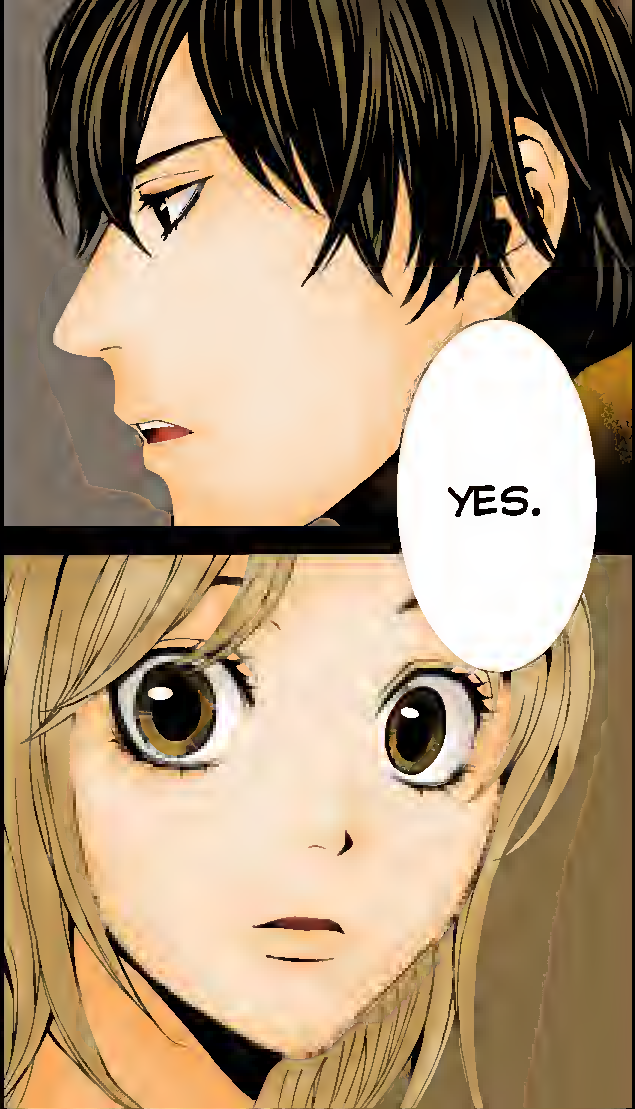
...JUST PAWNS IN THEIR GAME?!
CREAK
SCREECH

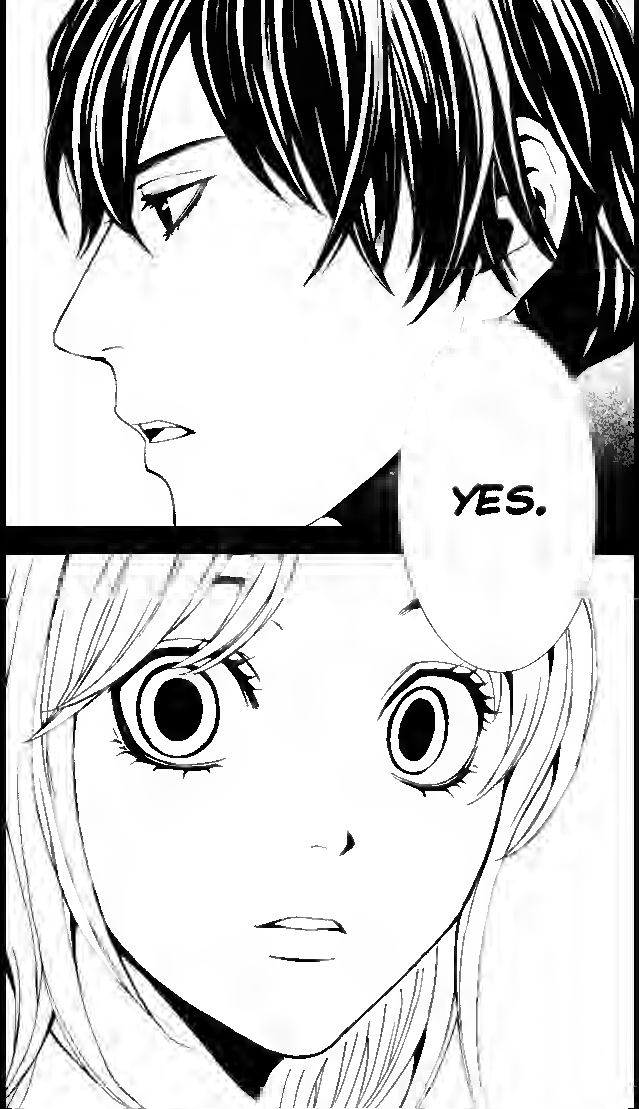
キキキキ
screech
ゴゴゴゴ
rumble
YOU...!
Scanlations
Conversation


THEN ...
YOU SHOULD KILL ME NOW.
SO THE EMBEZZLEMENT GROUP LOSES THE LEVERAGE THEY NEED TO THREATEN MY DAD!

IF YOU TELL MY DAD THAT THE EMBEZZLEMENT GROUP KILLED ME, HE'LL GET MAD AND START TALKING.
IT'D BE BETTER FOR YOU, RIGHT?!
I WASN'T ORDERED TO KILL YOU.
MY MISSION IS TO BRING YOU TO THE DESIGNATED PLACE SAFELY.

SO,
IF YOUR BOSS TOLD YOU TO KILL ME,
YOU WOULD?


YES.


YES.

HE ONLY SAVED ME BECAUSE HE WAS ORDERED TO?!
CLACK
I WON'T PLAY THE FOOL FOR HIM!!
LET GO OF ME!
COME BACK! HELP IS ON THE WAY!
THERE'S ABSOLUTELY NO ONE...

...THAT I CAN TRUST!
IT'S MORE COMFORTABLE FOR ME...
...TO BE WITH YOU.
IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT.

THIS IS THE END, KISARAGI.
I CAN'T TRUST MY DAD, THE COWARD WHO COULD ONLY APOLOGIZE TO ME.
I CAN'T TRUST MY MOM, WHO FELL APART AND LEFT ME TO FEND FOR MYSELF.
AND I CAN'T TRUST MY FRIENDS, WHO ABANDONED ME WHEN I NEEDED THEM MOST.

THERE IS NO LONGER...
...ANYONE I CAN TRUST.
I...
RECEIVED THE ORDER TO PROTECT YOU.

I WILL ACCOMPLISH THAT MISSION...
...NO MATTER WHAT.

FLASH
!!
カシャ
CLICK
カシャ
CLICK
SORRY, I'M LATE.

C-BLOSSOM <CAS1729> (1/TIN
BROUGHT TO YOU BY CONDENSATION/"BANG"

C-blossom
case729
-blossom

MANGA: SHIMOTSUKI KAYOKO
STORY: FUKUI HARUTOSHI

C-blossom -case729-

ACCESSING CHAPTER 2 CREDITS...
...FILE RETRIEVED. DISPLAYING...

THIS CHAPTER HAS BEEN SCANNED BY VANDER-GUARD, TRANSLATED BY ^_^TANPOPO, PROOFED AND ADAPTED BY VANDERGUARD, EDITED BY GALLANE, AND QUALITY CHECKED BY VANDER-GUARD AND SYLVERANGEL. COLOR OPENING COURTESY OF BLUEJSEA.

-TRANSMISSION COMPLETE-

C-blossom

case729

WHY ISN'T IT ME?

WHY DON'T YOU TRUST ME?

TOUYA.

WHY...IS IT ALWAYS KISARAGI?!

WHY KISARAGI?

WHY HIM...?

WHY THAT FATHER KILLER?
...KISARAGI?
WELL, WHAT WILL YOU DO...

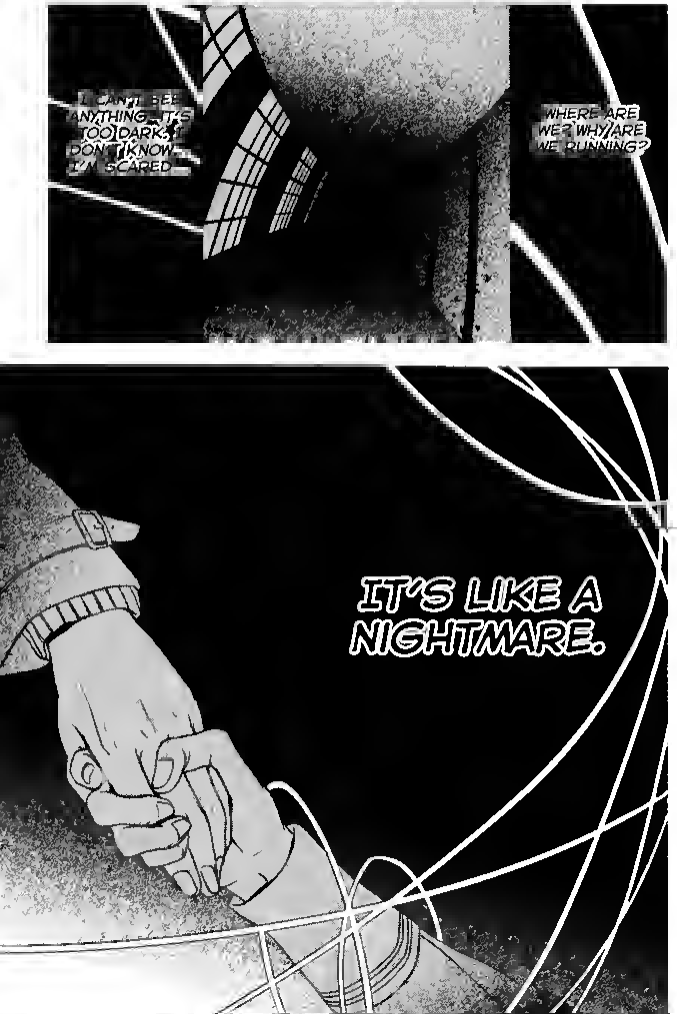
HEY... WHERE IS THE REAL RESCUE UNIT...?
THEY'RE NOT COMING.

DAMN.

!
DASH

PANT
PANT
PANT
...WAIT!
PANT
THE ONLY SHELTER THEY'RE GOING TO FIND IS A DILAPIDATED OLD RESORT...
IT'S EXACTLY AS I PLANNED.
Scanlations

NO ONE...
PANT
PANT
NO ONE IS COMING!...
WHY IS IT THAT NO ONE ...
THE INFORMATION WAS LEAKED WE SHOULD CUT THROUGH THIS OLD HOTEL TO GET TO THE MAIN STREET
...IS COMING FOR US ...?
PANT


I CAN'T SEE ANYTHING... IT'S TOO DARK... I DON'T KNOW... I'M SCARED...
WHERE ARE WE? WHY ARE WE RUNNING?
IT'S LIKE A NIGHTMARE.

SHOOT
!
SHOOT
APPEARS
CLOSING IN
CLOSING IN
BANG
...!
STARTLED
BANG
BANG
BANG

LET'S GO!
PANT
GRAB
DASH
PANT
...!

POINTS

BANG

BANG

DEAD.
DEAD.
SCOR
SCORE

IT'S NOT A DREAM.

HOLD
!
YANK

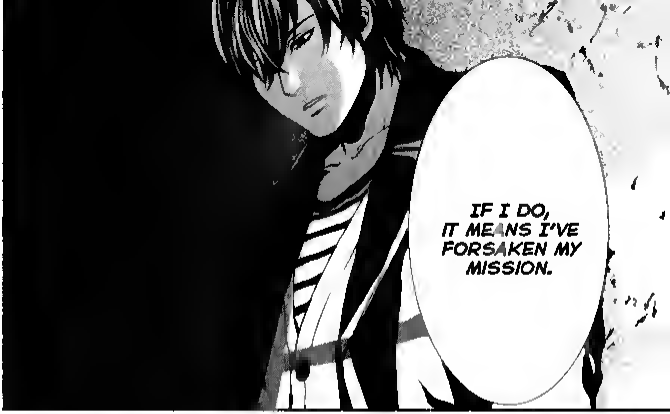
HEY...
SLAP
HURRY.
...I CAN'T.
FALL

slide down
...I CAN'T GO.

CLICK

DROP

THEN I WILL DIE WITH YOU.
...
...WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I CAN'T RUN WITH A CHARGE WHO IS NOT WILLING TO SURVIVE.
YOU CAN GO WITHOUT ME.


IF I DO, IT MEANS I'VE FORSAKEN MY MISSION.

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING...?

I DON'T UNDER-STAND. MISSION THIS, MISSION THAT...
ARE YOU EVEN HUMAN?
YES. IT'S BECAUSE I AM HUMAN.

BECAUSE I WANT TO BE HUMAN FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE...
...I CAN'T RUN AWAY.

THAT'S MY...
...RULE.

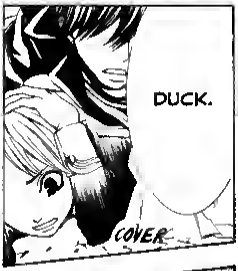
Scanlations
www.scanlations.nl

BANG
AHHH!

CRACK
CRACK

SLASH

CRACK


DUCK.
COVER

HIDES

TWITCH

HAH
...
...TCH.

FLIP
SHO-
-VES
TUD
I DON'T UNDER-STAND
MISSION, MISSION!
REALLY
EXTENDS
LET'S GO!

SHOOT
SHOOT
SHOOT
!
THUD
LET'S RUN TOWARDS THE NEXT BUILDING.
BANG
BANG

STEP
STEP
STEP
STEP
STEP

SHOOT
APPEARS
BANG
BANG
STEP
STEP
STEP

AIMS
TACKLE

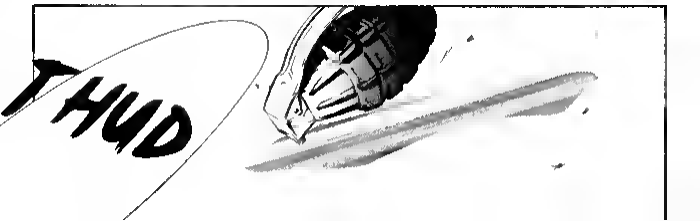
YOU KILLED A LOT OF MY MEN, KISARAGI.

I'D CONGRATULATE YOU, BUT ACCORDING TO MY ESTIMATION, YOUR MAGAZINE IS ALMOST EMPTY BY NOW.
HERE, MATSUMIYA.
COME TO YOUR TEACHER.

GET'S UP
YOU'RE AN IMPORTANT HOSTAGE...
...WHY DO YOU THINK YOUR INFORMATION WAS LEAKED?
CLICK
CLICK

TWITCH
NOT EVERY-THING YOU KNOW IS TRUE.
...
...LIAR.

GRAB
SLASH
!!
...YOU...!!
CLICK


THUD

BOOM

THUD

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chu
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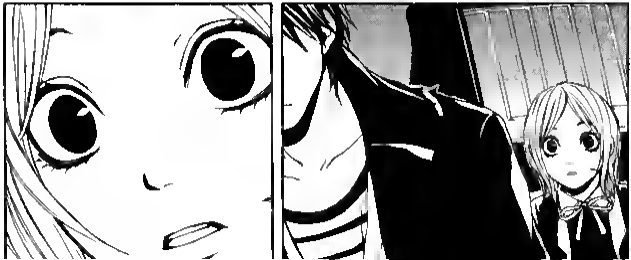
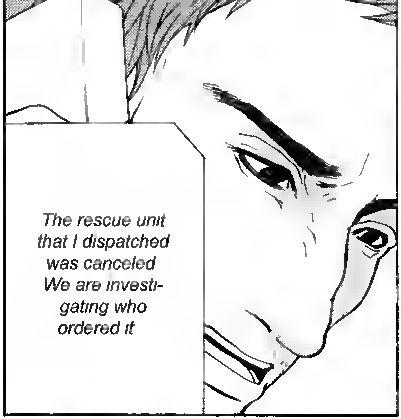
#Condensation
Condensation Scanlations
Condensation Scanlations

CLACK

THAT SAVED US.



...KOU.
THANK YOU.
WE NEED TO GET GOING.

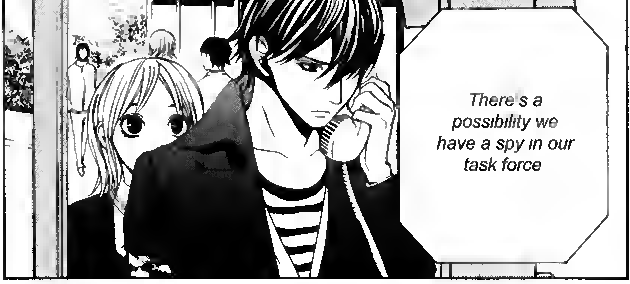

The rescue unit that I dispatched was canceled We are investigating who ordered it

I heard about the situation

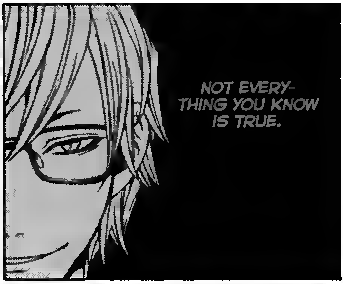
BE CAREFUL... THEY KNOW OUR MOVES.

YES.
You and the charge should turn off your cell phones
They could be tracking you through them

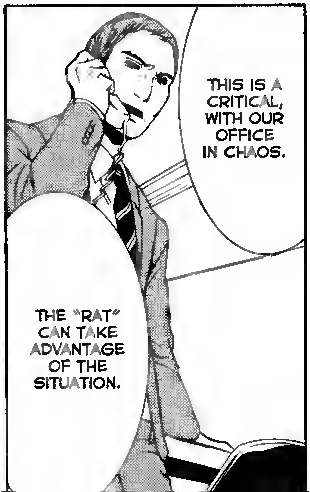
But it was definitely done by our enemy


There's a possibility we have a spy in our task force

So far many executives have been arrested based on Matsumiya's testimony


NOT EVERY-THING YOU KNOW IS TRUE.

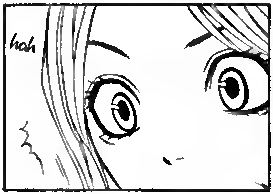
Anyone could flip sides and become our enemy.

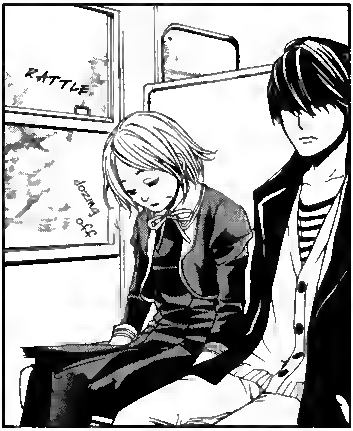

THIS IS A CRITICAL, WITH OUR OFFICE IN CHAOS.
THE "RAT" CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE SITUATION.

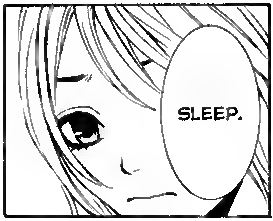
I think you understand this already, but
don't trust anyone except me
YES.

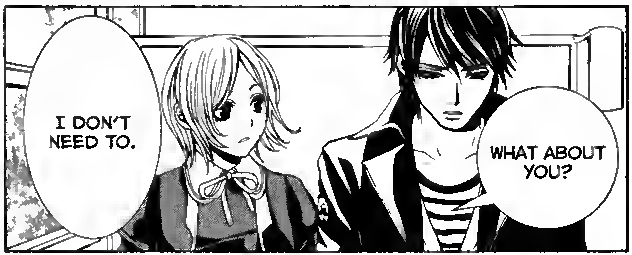
I'm meeting with the new manager and making arrangements to bring you in
EVEN HE HAS SOMEONE WHOM HE TRUSTS VERY MUCH...
...YOU NEED TO GET BACK TO TOKYO WITH MATSUMIYA KANA.
I DON'T CARE HOW.

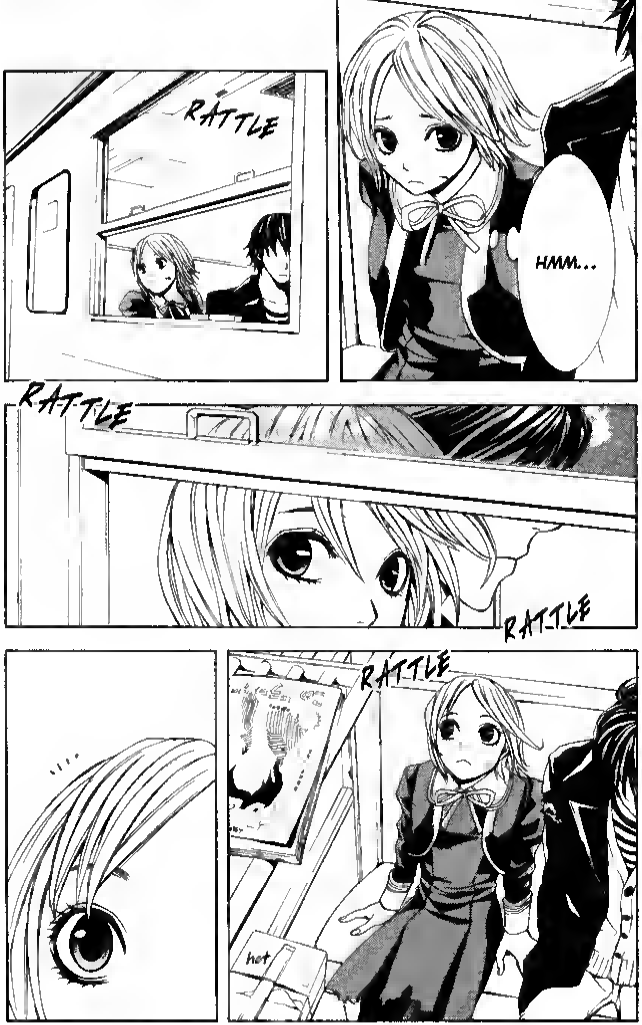
RATTLE
ラタン
RATTLE
ラタン


hah

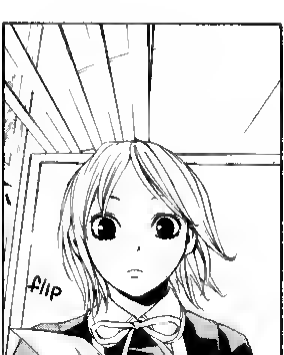

RATTLE
STOP
DOOR


SLEEP.


I DON'T NEED TO.
WHAT ABOUT YOU?

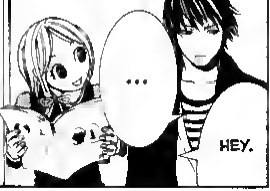

RATTLE
HMM...
RATTLE
RATTLE
RATTLE
hot

HAPPY ASTROLOGY
May


flip

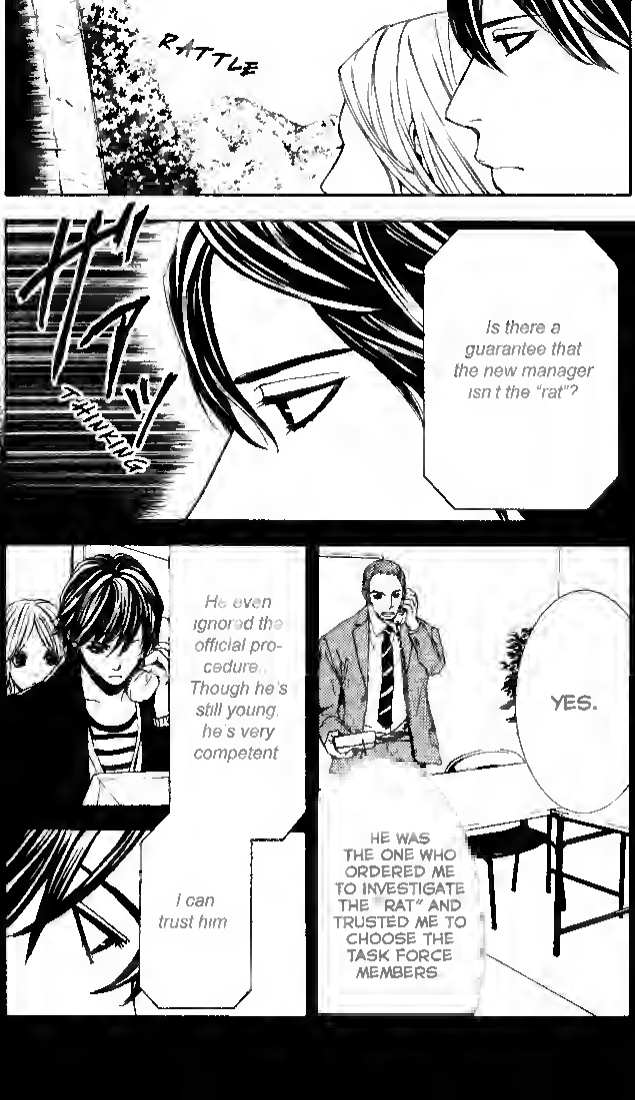
GRAB
GOT IT!

...
HEY.


I guess you don't have any friends.

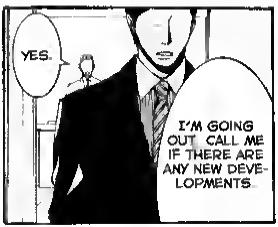
HEY, WHEN IS YOUR BIRTHDAY?

THAT'S WHY TOUYA HATES YOU.
WHAT DID YOU DO?
...I DON'T KNOW.
YOU SHOULD MAKE AN EFFORT TO MAKE FRIENDS...
...AH.
RATTLE
...WELL, I DON'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS EITHER...
RATTLE

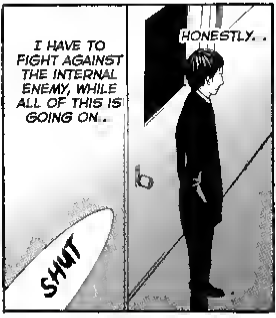

RATTLE
HIM
THINKING
Is there a guarantee that the new manager isn't the "rat"?
He even ignored the official procedure. Though he's still young, he's very competent
I can trust him
YES.
HE WAS THE ONE WHO ORDERED ME TO INVESTIGATE THE "RAT" AND TRUSTED ME TO CHOOSE THE TASK FORCE MEMBERS

...IF YOU SAY SO.
DAIS
Defense Agency Information Service
THIS IS TERRIBLE.
RUSTLE

WE CAN CLEAN UP ALL TRACES OF THE MOUNTAIN BATTLE...
KEEP OUT
...AND MATSUMIYA NAOYUKI'S DAUGHTER IS SAFE FOR NOW.
Report
MATSUMIYA KANA'S ASSASSIN IS STILL ON THE LOOSE...
...AND THE RESULT IS THIS...
COMMIS-SIONER ATSUMI.
BUT WITHOUT KNOWING WHO IS AN ALLY AND WHO IS THE ENNEMY...
CLICK
...
THE POLICE DEPARTMENT CALLED REGAR-DING THE G ISSUE...


YES.
I'M GOING OUT. CALL ME IF THERE ARE ANY NEW DEVELOPMENTS.

GET ME A CAR.


I HAVE TO FIGHT AGAINST THE INTERNAL ENEMY, WHILE ALL OF THIS IS GOING ON.
HONESTLY...
SHUT

SO BOTHER-SOME...
A.9.1 BATTLE

LET'S HAVE LUNCH.
HERE.
GIVES
hot
PULL
STEAM

GRAB
THROWS
DUCK!

ARGH!
...
RATTLE
RATTLE
MY...
MY LUNCH ...!
...WHY DIDN'T IT EXPLODE?
RATTLE
HAVEN'T YOU HEARD OF THE KIND WHERE YOU PULL THE STRING AND IT HEATS ITSELF UP?!
IT'S NOT SUPPOSED TO!! IT'S JUST A BOXED LUNCH!

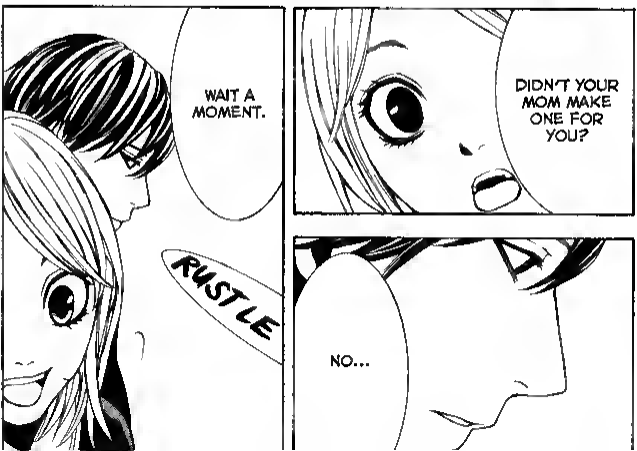
OH, NO.
DID YOU DROP YOUR LUNCH?
FLUSH!
...
...MY LUNCH...
CATCH
AH.
HERE, TAKE THIS.

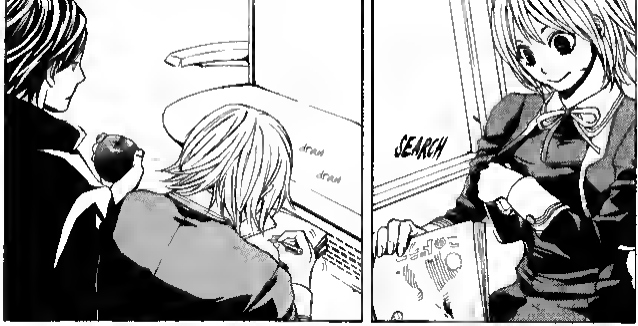
THANK YOU SO MUCH!
GRAB
AH.
AH...
HEY!
GIVE ME A KNIFE.
I'M GONNA PEEL IT.
You have a knife, don't you?
YOU SHOULD SAY THANK YOU WHEN YOU RECEIVE SOMETHING!

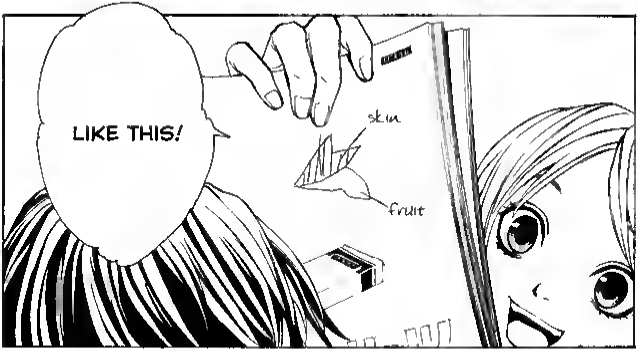
PUSH
I HAVE ONE, BUT I CAN'T LET YOU USE IT.
...
PUSH
THEN, YOU HAVE TO PEEL IT.
IN A RABBIT SHAPE!
...A RABBIT?

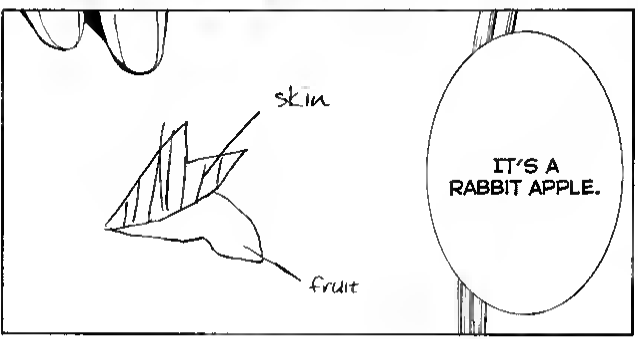
HONK
RATTLE
RATTLE
RATTLE

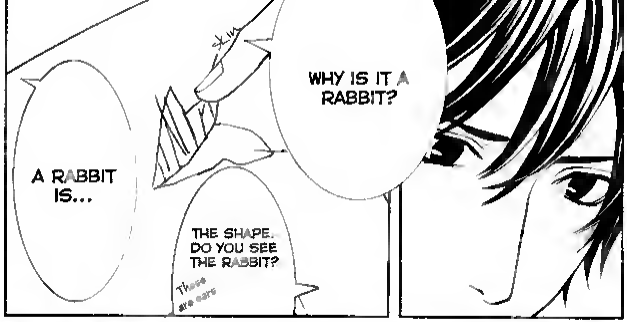
SERIOUSLY?
YOU'RE NOT JOKING?
DIDN'T YOU HAVE IT IN YOUR LUNCH WHEN YOU WERE IN KINDER-GARTEN?
RATTLE
YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT A RABBIT APPLE IS?
RATTLE


WAIT A MOMENT.
RUSTLE
DIDN'T YOUR MOM MAKE ONE FOR YOU?
NO...


draw
draw
SEARCH

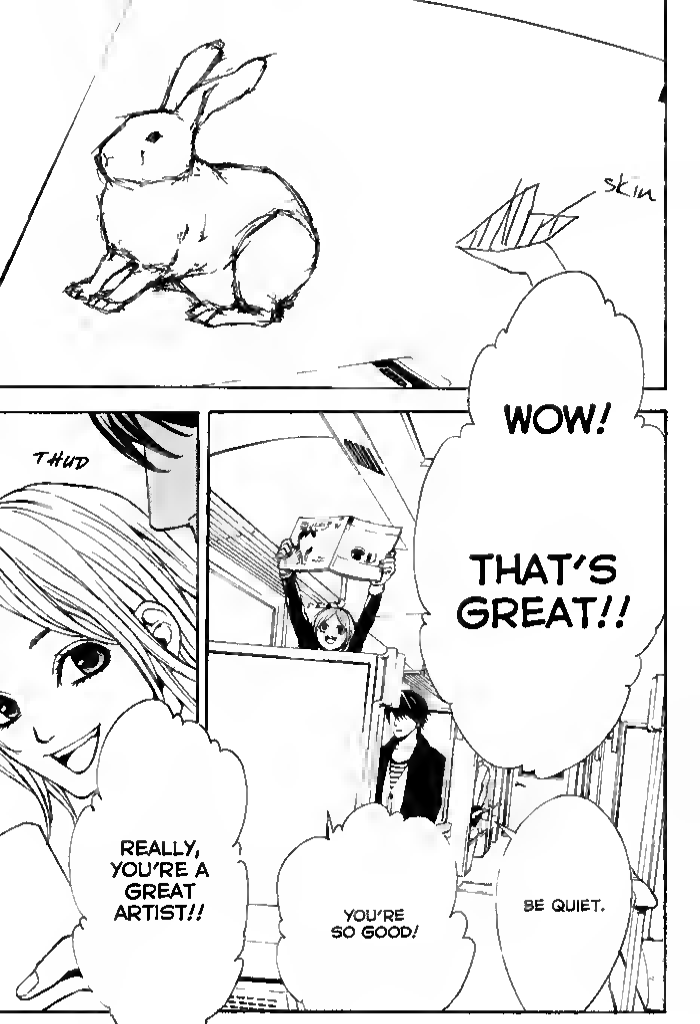

LIKE THIS!
skin
fruit

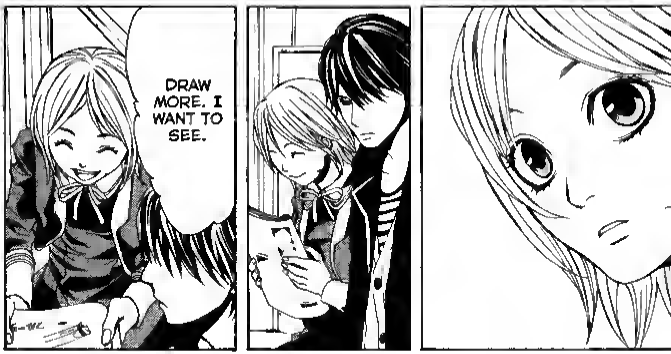

skin
fruit
IT'S A RABBIT APPLE.

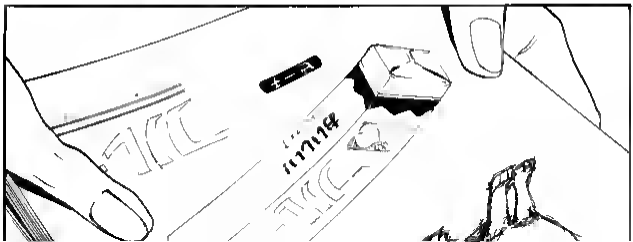

WHY IS IT A RABBIT?
A RABBIT IS...
THE SHAPE. DO YOU SEE THE RABBIT?
There are ears

RUSTLE

...LIKE THIS.
draw
draw


skin
WOW!
THAT'S GREAT!!
BE QUIET.
YOU'RE SO GOOD!
THUD
REALLY, YOU'RE A GREAT ARTIST!!


DRAW MORE. I WANT TO SEE.



RATTLE
SLICE
RATTLE
RATTLE
EVEN IF YOU CAN DRAW,
RATTLE
OPEN
IT WON'T SAVE YOUR LIFE.

RATTLE
RATTLE
BUT YOU'RE SO GOOD...
RATTLE
YOU HAVE TALENT, IT'S A WASTE NOT TO USE IT.
IT'S A WASTE OF TIME.

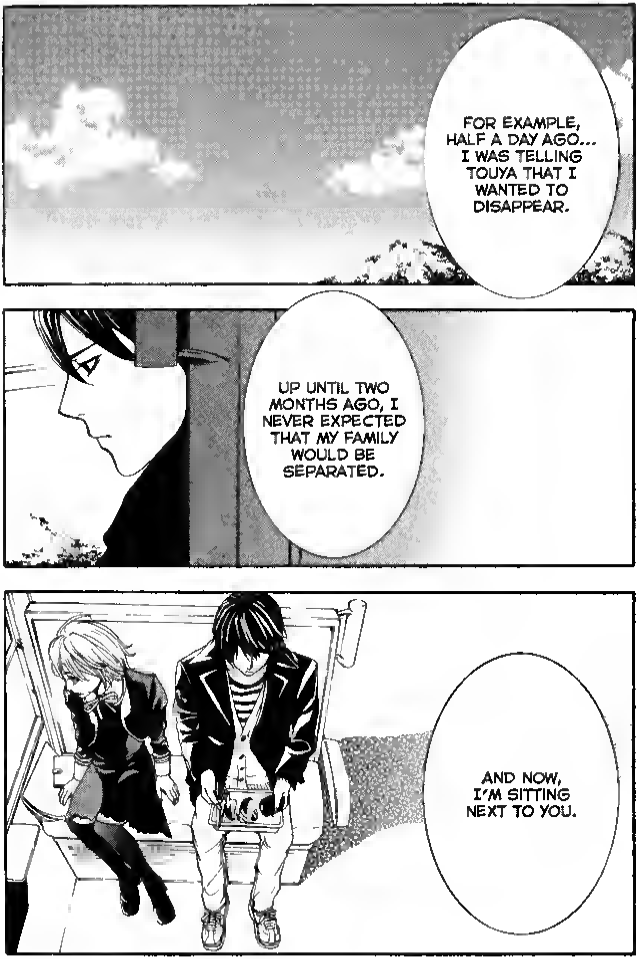
DRAWINGS ARE MORE LIKE...
DRAWING ONLY WITH YOUR HAND ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH.
...ANYWAY...
SLICE
AND I DON'T WANT TO.
I DON'T HAVE THE RIGHT TO DRAW RIGHT NOW.

THAT'S ALL.

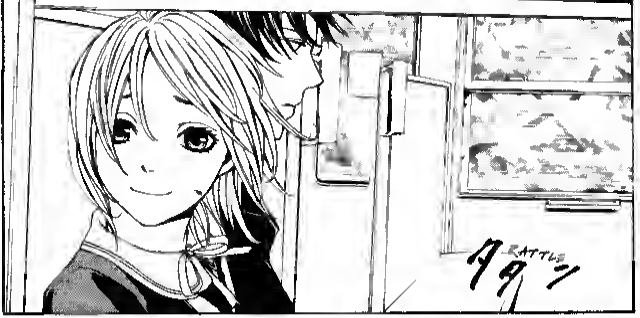
SLICE
SLICE
SLICE
TAP
HOP
HOP
SLICE
TAP
TAP
YOU DON'T HAVE TO MAKE PERMANENT DECISIONS LIKE THAT.

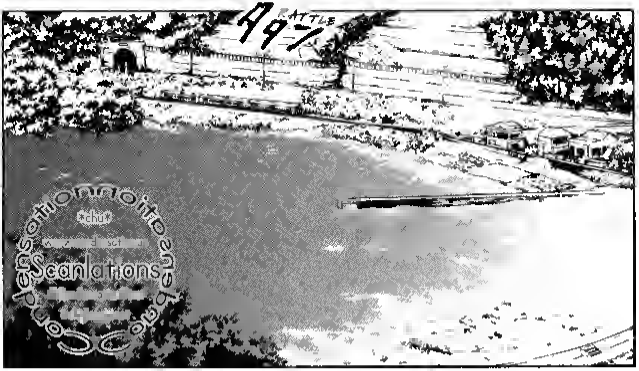
RIGHT?

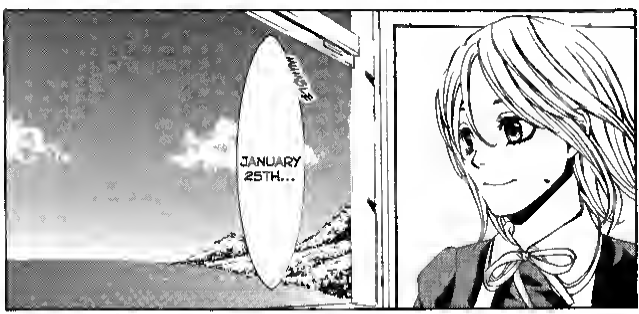
TURN
くるっ
chew
chew
...
Oh?
...BECAUSE, WHEN YOU'RE ALIVE,
MANY UNPRE-DICTABLE THINGS HAPPEN.


FOR EXAMPLE, HALF A DAY AGO... I WAS TELLING TOUYA THAT I WANTED TO DISAPPEAR.
UP UNTIL TWO MONTHS AGO, I NEVER EXPECTED THAT MY FAMILY WOULD BE SEPARATED.
AND NOW, I'M SITTING NEXT TO YOU.

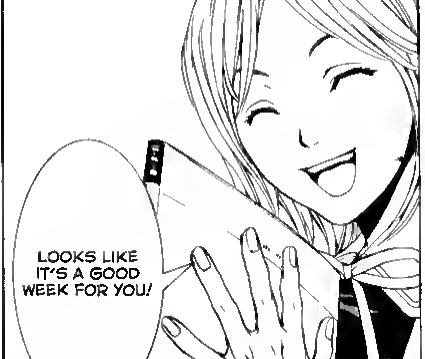
I'M ON A TRAIN WITH SOMEONE LAUGHING LIKE AN IDIOT...
IT'S WEIRD, SINCE WE WERE RUNNING FOR OUR LIVES NOT SO LONG AGO...
...I DIDN'T THINK THAT...
...I WOULD EXPERIENCE ANYTHING LIKE THIS AGAIN.


BATTLE 49


BATTLE 49
Scanlations

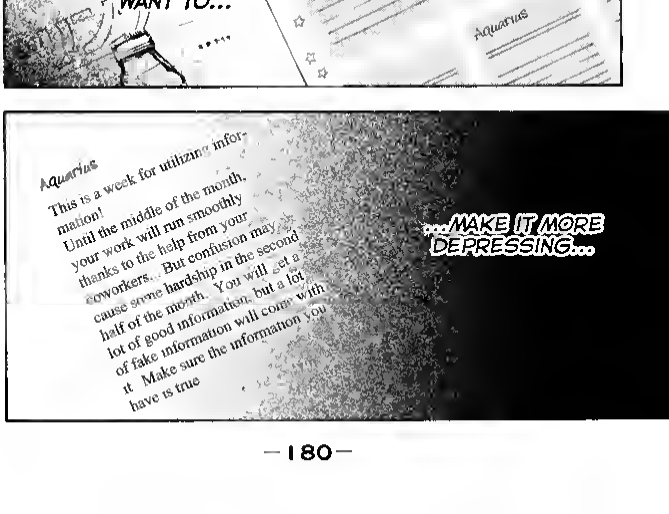

JANUARY 25TH...

YOU ASKED...
HUH?
...MY BIRTH-DAY.
HM, JANUARY 25TH...
SO, YOU'RE... AN AQUA-RIUS?
"This is a week for utilizing information!
HAPPY
Until the middle of the month, your work will run smoothly thanks to the help from your coworkers—"
Virgo


LOOKS LIKE IT'S A GOOD WEEK FOR YOU!

SHUT

I DON'T WANT TO...
Libra
Aquarius


Aquarius
This is a week for utilizing information!
Until the middle of the month, your work will run smoothly thanks to the help from your coworkers... But confusion may cause some hardship in the second half of the month. You will get a lot of good information, but a lot of fake information will come with it. Make sure the information you have is true
...MAKE IT MORE DEPRESSING...

A PLACE IN TOKYO
SLIDE

I'LL GET YOUR REPORT LATER. TAKE HER TO THIS ROOM FIRST. HERE IS THE KEY
THANK YOU, KISARAGI.
AH... THIS IS THE PERSON WHO WAS ON THE PHONE.
YOU MUST BE CHIEF MATSUMIYA'S DAUGHTER.
I KNOW IT'S BEEN HARD FOR YOU, BUT YOU WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THINGS ANY-MORE. WE'LL PROTECT YOU WITH EVERYTHING WE HAVE. PLEASE GET SOME REST.

AH... THANK YOU.
THE ROOM IS ON THE THIRD FLOOR. YOU CAN TAKE THE ELEVATOR ON THE RIGHT. YOU SHOULD GET SOME REST, TOO, KISARAGI.

CLICK
CLICK

CLICK
CLICK

CLICK

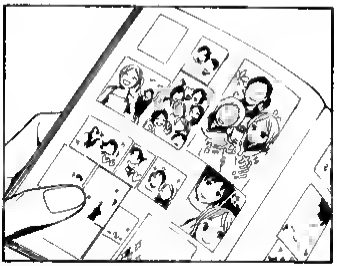
I FEEL LIKE I'VE LIVED MY ENTIRE LIFE IN THE PAST TWO DAYS.

AH...
I'M SO TIRED.
THUD

BUT I CAN TAKE IT EASY NOW...
THUD

STEP
SLIDE
YOU DROPPED THIS...

FLIP

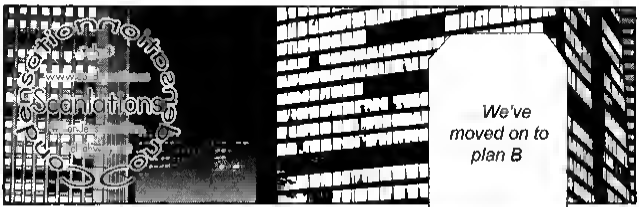


...DAD.

...DAD...

RUSTLE
SQUEAK

SHUT


We've moved on to plan B

The target will be leaving soon

Don't miss this time,
Touya

Roger.

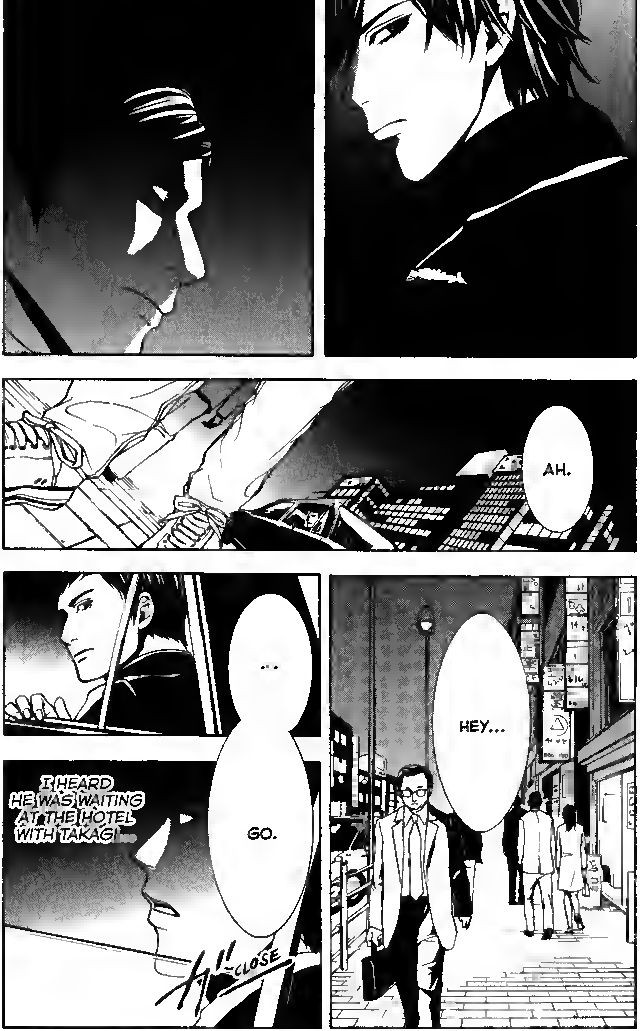
WHEN I SEE HIM, I'LL...
SCREECH
DEFINITELY FINISH KISARAGI OFF THIS TIME.
PLEASE PROMISE ME THAT YOU WILL LEAVE HIM TO ME...
GRAB
...Touya.

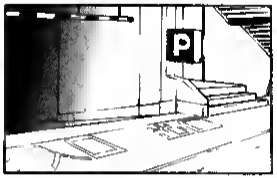
Don t get carried away by your emotions
Focus on your mission right now
BEEP
BEEP
CLICK

NOW THAT WE'VE SECURED MATSUMIYA'S DAUGHTER, WE CAN'T USE HER TO DRAW OUT THE "RAT".
THAT'S OKAY WE DON'T WANT TO KEEP EXPOSING HER TO DANGER.
THEN WE NEED MATSUMIYA TO TELL US EVERY-THING.
BUT ONLY IF WE SUC-CESSFULLY MOVE HER TO THE HEAD-QUARTERS SAFELY
HE'LL START TALKING
THE "RAT" ACTUALLY ATTACKED US WHEN MATSUMIYA KNOWS THAT WE'RE PRO-TECTING HIS DAUGHTER..

!
SQUEAL
STOP.
OPEN

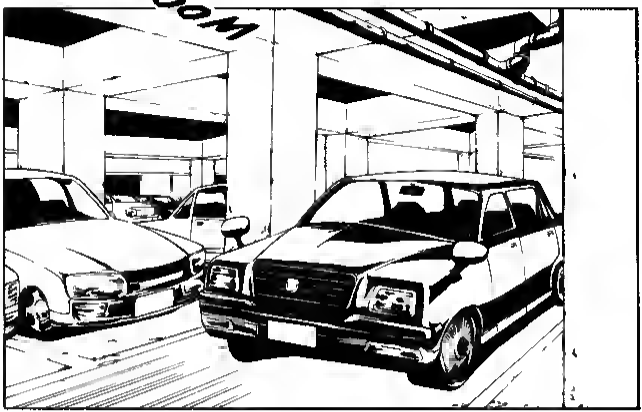
729...
STAFF SERGEANT KISARAGI?
YOU WERE PUT ON THE TASK FORCE BY MY DIRECT ORDER.
I REMEMBER YOUR FACE.


AH.
...
HEY...
GO.
I HEARD HE WAS WAITING AT THE HOTEL WITH TAKAGI
CLOSE


P

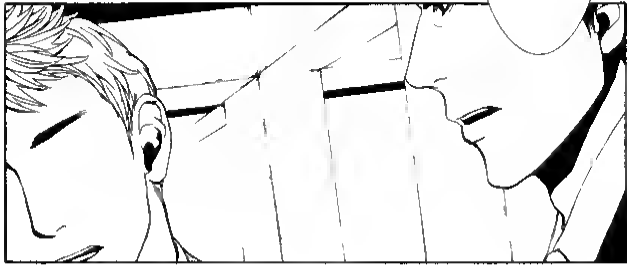
VROOOM

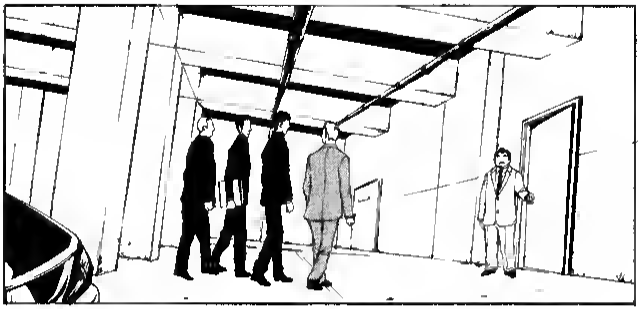
WHY IS HE OUT BY HIM-SELF?



TAP
COMMISSIONER ATSUMI, WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU.

PLEASE, THIS WAY.





NOISE
Touya.

FALL BACK
We're postponing the mission
We lost 729.
...WHY?

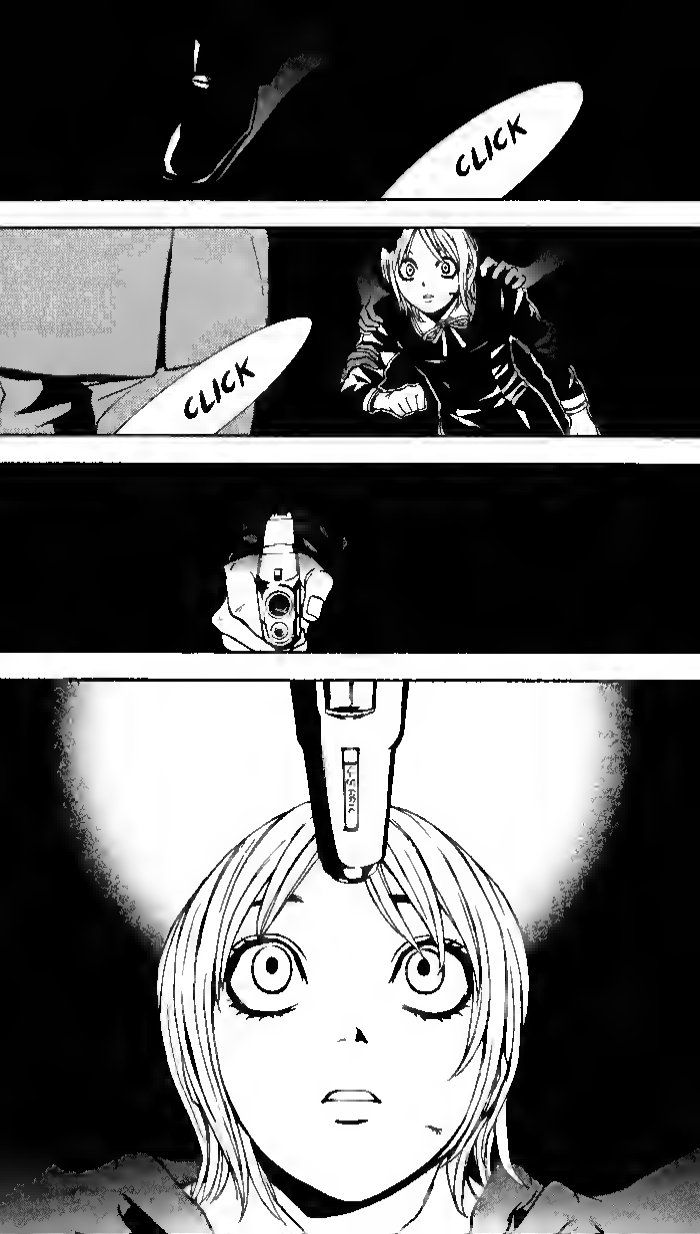
FROM NOW ON, WE CARRY OUT PLAN C...
WE ARE NOW IN PLAN C-BLOSSOM.
KISARAGI?!
DON'T PANIC...
WE HAVE AN ACE.
NOISE
Good luck, Touya
I trust you

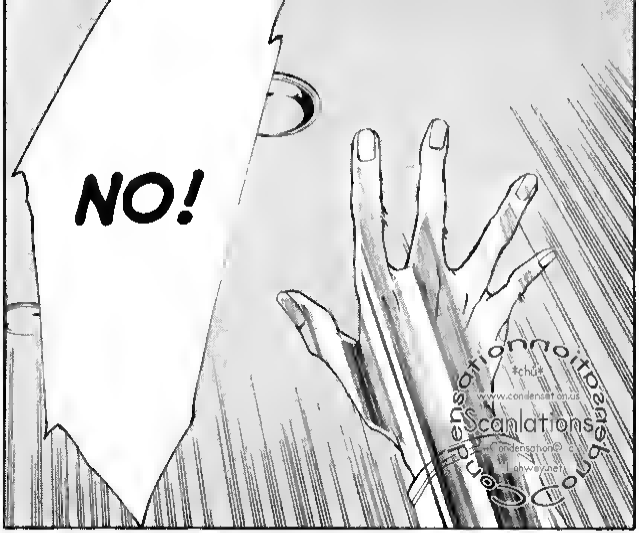
SMILE
...YES.

WE HAVE THE AGE, MATSUMIYA KANA.
CHUCKLE

ENJOY THE TRIP TOMORROW WITH YOUR MOM.

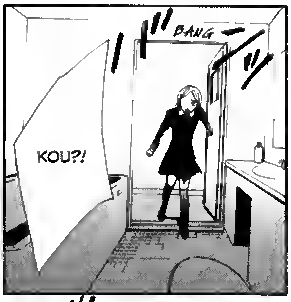
DAD...
!
DAD?
LEAVE ME ALONE!
HELP ME! DAD...
...!!

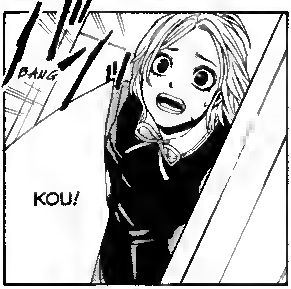

CLICK
CLICK



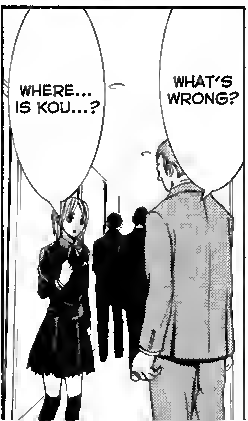
Condensation Scanlations
#chu#
www.condensation.us
Condensation Scanlations
Not Condensation
ohwe.net

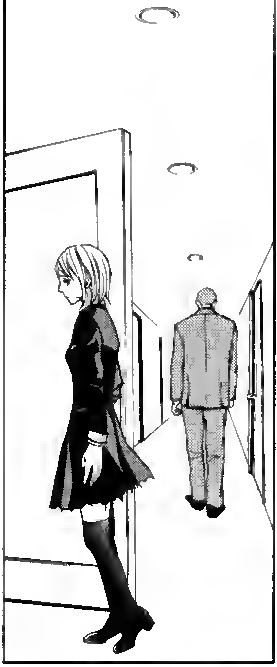
AH–

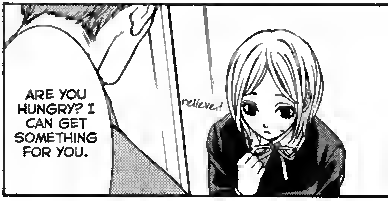

BANG
KOU?!


BANG
KOU!

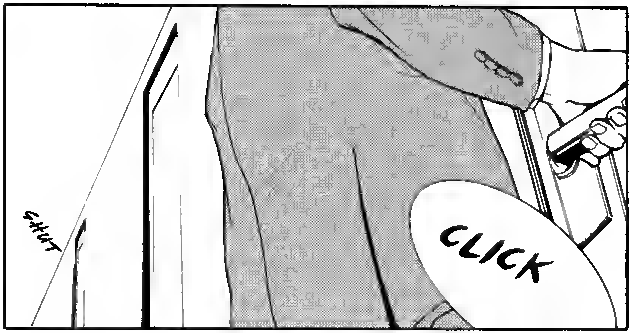
DON'T WORRY ABOUT KISARAGI.
HE WENT TO HEAD-QUARTERS TO REPORT.


WHERE... IS KOU...?
WHAT'S WRONG?

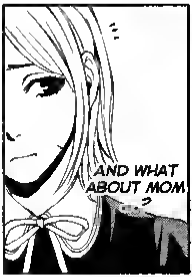



ARE YOU HUNGRY? I CAN GET SOMETHING FOR YOU.
relieve.

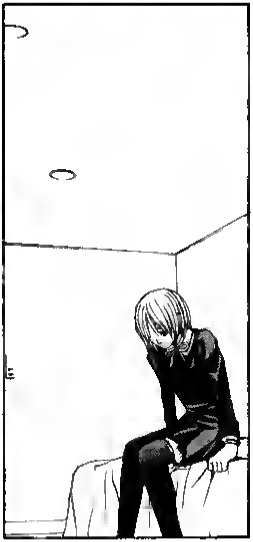
YOU CAN REST EASY THEN
THE PEOPLE FROM HEAD-QUARTERS ARE COMING SOON

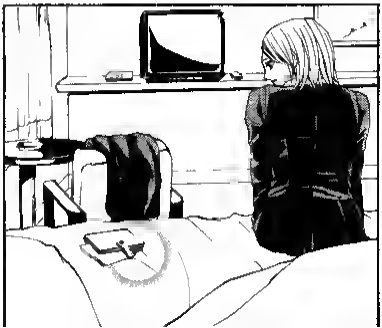

CLICK
GHUT

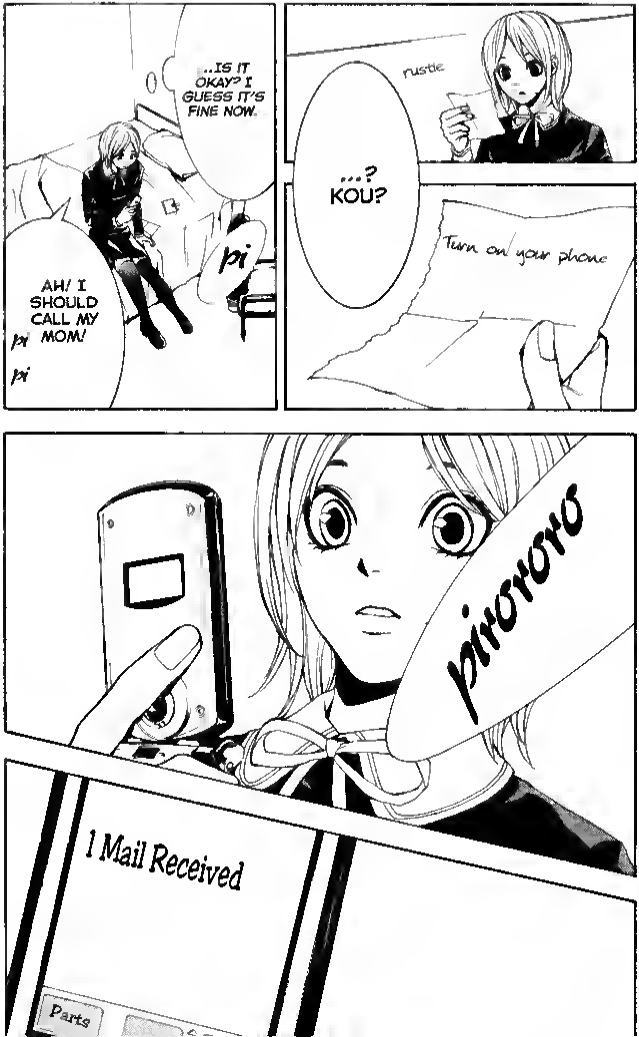
COMMISSIONER ATSUMI.
I'M SORRY FOR MAKING YOU WAIT.

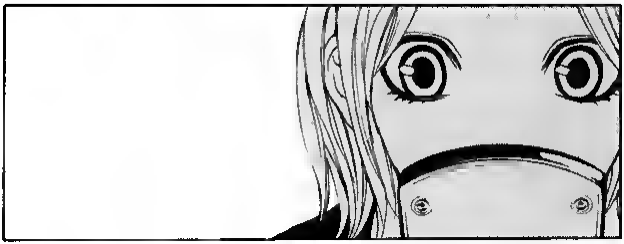

AND WHAT ABOUT MOM?

DAD... I WONDER IF HE'S OKAY...
CLICK






...IS IT OKAY? I GUESS IT'S FINE NOW.
pi
AH! I SHOULD CALL MY MOM!
pi
pi
rustle
...? KOU?
Turn on your phone
pirororo
1 Mail Received
Parts



Message

Emergency

It's Kisaragi.
Get out of there. Hurry.

Reply | Functions | Switch

C-BLOSSOM -CAST29- #2/FIN
BROUGHT TO YOU BY CONDENSATION/"BANG"

The clock that was frozen for five years suddenly started working again. That's my situation now.
It's been a half-year since I first met Mr. Haruto-shi Fukui. The movie Aegis is coming out soon, and Mr. Fukui's presence is growing. When I look back at my comics, I see how inadequate it is in honoring his name, and push myself to work harder.
Creation is like the delivery of a baby. The mother suffers so much before her baby is born, but she forgets the pain afterwards. Creating something is just like that. But I have no real experience in delivering babies. I want to create something that gives me two or three times as much joy in return for the hard struggle. Right now, I'm in the midst of the Lamaze method."

July 2005 Shimotsuki Kayoko

Special Thanks

Yukari. Furuichi
Ryoji. Takagaki

illustration
Miyako. Nonaka

Like a girls' comic?

Fukui Harutoshi

The director of the movie Lorelei, Shinji Higuchi, once told me with confidence, "Fukui-san, your stories are kind of like girls' comics."
I don't remember when that was.

Stateless, the end of war, warring states. My stories are full of such difficult themes. Most of you may think, "He's kidding," but you might understand what he meant if you have good intuition. It wasn't really a surprise to me, and it showed sharp insight into what I couldn't express myself. I was convinced unconditionally that he was right.

Of course, when we say "girls' comics," it reflects our generation's perception. It doesn't necessarily mean starry eyes and flowery backgrounds. Takemiya Keiko and Moto Hagio represent girls' comic writers. Well, that's not really correct, either. They should be called female comic writers. They write the hard, SF romance sagas, while Mineo Maya writes Patariro!, a hybrid of devastating jokes and espionage. Boys' comics have strong commercial inclination, thus they have become extreme and cheap, while the once-stereotyped girls' comics now tell stories that depict human drama with sensitive depth as their weapon. That's why he said, "It's like a girls' comic."

In fact, Kisaragi Kou is very lively in Betsufure Viva! The comic version of the main story Aegis is being serialized in Weekly Morning Kou in C-blossom is just as good as the Kou in Aegis. Or rather, sometimes Kou in C-blossom looks more like the Aegis Kou I imagined myself. At the age of 22, Miss Shimotsuki Kayoko has such an awesome talent for digesting a hard character like Kou, and throwing back ideas that exceed my expectations. This keeps the comic so close to the original "skin tone." Nevertheless, I have to admit my stories do seem more like girls' comics.

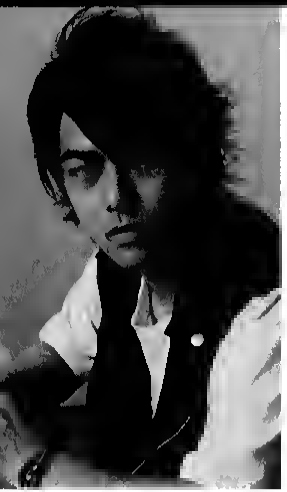
I didn't intend for that to happen. I didn't read a lot of girls' comics. (Well, I love Patariro!) But why would my comics turn out this way? I can analyze why other people's are like that, but have no understanding of my own. One thing is for sure, I stopped reading boys' comics so long ago, I don't remember when it happened. No, to be correct, I stopped reading them because I resented them. In a weekly magazine, the stories are put in order based on their popularity. A particular story could be a complete disaster as long as it's popular. Although it's nearly impossible to publish a "creative work," a simple man's stupidity makes an author try to accommodate the readers' and editors' requests. This results in the thinning of the story, and putting the author's creative life in danger. When the stories' structures became too obvious, it was clear to me that they were only temporal 'products' produced to make money? Gain popularity?

Girls' comics are different. Well, I can't really say that—they, too, are also designed for commercial success, and when the system gets too stale the priority often gets screwed up. Aegis's original story and this spin-off from the original are both challenges to this problem. They ask what each of us can do about it.

Individual free will demonstrated through adversity, and morals without calculated reasoning are the only things that can save the world from deep despair. This is romanticism resembling a prayer. If 'man's dream' is self-satisfaction, the harsher, higher, and more restrained romanticism may be at the core of my stories. Then, this explains why my stories compliment girls' comics, because girls' comics are for women who instinctively feel that man's dream is phony, and who want romance.

In other words, I could conclude that Aegis contains some romanticism that satisfies women, but I didn't mean for it to have any so I can't brag about it. If I was proud of it, that makes me self-satisfied by my 'man's dream.' With her sensitivity towards the desires of women, Miss Shimotsuki Kayoko clears those hurdles so easily, I'm starving not to be left behind by her.

Katsuji Ryo Special Interview!!



The movie Aegis, based on Fukui Harutoshi's best seller, was the biggest movie in 2005. In the movie, popular actor Katsuji Ryo played agent Kisaragi Kou. The author of *C-blossom*, Shimotsuki Kayoko had an interview with him!

Shimotsuki: I watched the movie. I was very nervous during the preview session on the stage. Your hairstyle was just like Kou's in my comic, so I was thinking, "He's really Kou!" while I was watching the movie.

Katsuji: Thank you. (Laugh)

Shimotsuki: You seemed very natural in the movie. Even the way you ate.

Katsuji: I guess it might have been because one take was long. There were scenes when the character changed by talking to Mr. Sanada.

Shimotsuki: I see.

Katsuji: The real Defense Force helped us, too. I rode on the real Aegis, and the set built in Shizuoka was very realistic. There wasn't much CG. It was very helpful to be able to act in places like that.

Shimotsuki: About the character, Kisaragi Kou. What were things you cared about while playing him?

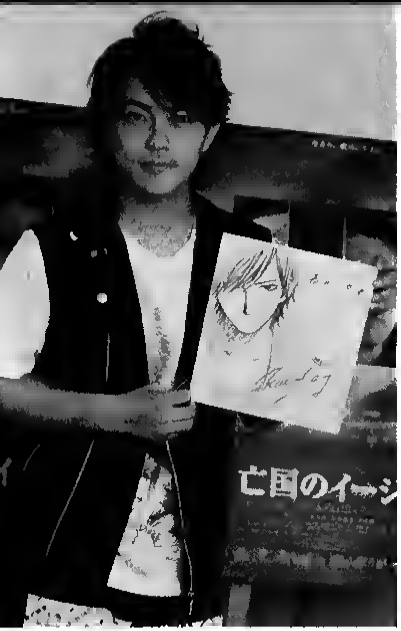
Katsuji: Kisaragi has been through a lot. It was hard to understand it all, since I hadn't been through the same things. But I tried to keep Kou's feelings in here (putting his hand on his chest) all the time.

Shimotsuki: I thought you acted very naturally during the scenes of Kou's past. You weren't over-exaggerating. It was very nice.

–Shimotsuki Kayoko

I was playing Kisaragi Kou and thinking of my parents.

Katsuji Ryo Special Interview!!



Katsuji: Thank you. I don't think Kou would reveal his emotions, so I was always thinking about what he was supposed to be feeling when he was talking or silent. I think that his foundation was the episode with his parents.

Shimotsuki: I met Mr. Fukui through this job, and it's been a great lesson for me. I appreciate him, and I've grown so much through him. How about you, by meeting "*Aegis*"?

Katsuji: I learned a lot through the many staff and great actors I worked with while filming at the different locations. I think I've changed, but now I want to change more. I was surrounded by so many great actors, and they gave me a lot of precious advice. I want to be like them when I become 43 or 44. (Like Mr. Sanada Hiroyuki.)

After interview

Katsuji-san was very nice! I really thought he was Kou on the screen, and now I got to meet him in person. He was a very pleasant young man of 18. I'm older, but I often thought he was older than me. He's that mature. I was impressed and also inspired!

–Shimotsuki Kayoko

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